HandMade in America • The 1996 Essay Contest Winner • Arthurdale, West Virginia

NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

THE CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND SERVICES • EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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Appalachian Visions: How the Region Sees Its Future

Articles, Essays, Fiction, Poetry, and Reviews

DOUBLE VISION

Sweetbriar, Virginia

Heather, look! I catch myself
seeing with both your eyes and mine
though you're in Philadelphia—
Look! Canadian geese,
with their black necks and white-striped chins.
The goslings stay close, fanning out from her.
See how the world's beauty has doubled for me
through you.
"Like seeing twice," Cézanne said of his love.

And there's this other knowing
that you see things for yourself.
At nine, you still want time near me.
"Come with me to my room, Mama.
Mama, lie with me for awhile."
Soon you will push me away,
drawn toward the outskirts of the lake
navigating your own sleek life.

The world you have drawn for me
creates a bright circle, a new eye
making intimate connections.
It doesn't matter where we stand—
mother and babies a compass,
a clearing.
I have to be this far away
to give you this.

— Marilyn Kallet

Marilyn Kallet is director of the creative writing program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She is the author of five books, including poetry, translation, criticism, and critical essays. In 1996, Blair Press will publish the multicultural anthology, Worlds in Our Words: Contemporary American Women Poets, *coedited by Kallet and Patricia Clark.*

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"Appalachia is a dynamic, growing region that contains some of the poorest areas in the nation."
— Andrew Isserman

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Visions Quest

There was a moment or two, I must confess, when I didn't think this issue on the future of Appalachia was ever going to come together.

Normally, we get many more submissions than we can possibly use. This issue was an exception. The first of March came and went, and while the folder for the winter issue on religion was already bulging, there was very little in the Visions file.

Then we read through the stack of essays submitted for the 1996 Appalachian Visions Essay Contest, a competition which asked writers to express their personal vision of the region's future. It didn't take long to realize that, almost without exception, the writers talked much more about the past than about the future. In fact, we could summarize the entries in one sentence: "I'm afraid of the future because it will mean losing more of the past — and we've already lost more of the past than I like."

We started beating the bushes for stories — and of course ended up having to add pages to the magazine to accommodate all of the copy that eventually found its way into our offices. This issue includes everything from descriptions of ambitious, broad-based strategic planning efforts to musings on what Blacksburg, Va.'s going electronic might mean to the region to the fanciful thoughts of a group of fifth graders about what 21st century life will be like.

Occasionally, we paused and wondered why people seemed so reluctant to peer into their crystal balls. If we were in another part of the country, would the task be so difficult? Do Appalachians treasure the past so much that they forget to look down the road? Or is it just that, as several people suggested, it's hard for anyone anywhere to picture the future since it hasn't happened yet.

During the course of our conversation for "De-Mobilizing Appalachia" (p.8), West Virginia University's Regional Research Institute director Andrew Isserman offered the opinion that perhaps our writers often seemed haunted by the sense that a part of their past was slipping through their fingers because "as Appalachian communities become more like the rest of the country, we know that something is lost. If Appalachia were stagnating, then you wouldn't be hearing these concerns. These are concerns bred by economic growth."

While Isserman's explanation made sense to me, I don't pretend to understand why at least some Appalachians seem so reluctant to peer into the future. I would love to hear the thoughts of *Now & Then* readers. Write to me, share your insights, and keep our new Letters to the Editor section going, all at the same time.

— Jane Harris Woodside, editor

Letters to the editor:

Cades Cove Correction

Thanks for the copies of the spring 1996 issue of *Now & Then.* It's a really interesting and attractive issue all the way through.

I'd like to correct one impression from the Cades Cove picture caption which appeared on page 28. The buildings in the Cove weren't brought in from elsewhere — they are the original Cove structures that were left standing selectively and rehabilitated. The Park Service manipulation was more subtle — the removal of more modern buildings so that "pioneer Appalachia" was all that remained. All the progress Cades Cove resident John Oliver and his ancestors had worked for generations to achieve was obliterated; that was the irony and tragedy that Oliver felt.

Historian Durwood Dunn writes at the conclusion of his book, *Cades Cove,* concerning the Park Service preservation project: "The single guiding principle was that anything which might remotely suggest progress or advancement beyond the most primitive stages should be destroyed. A sort of pioneer primitivism alone survived in the cove structures left standing. It was as though, having destroyed the community of Cades Cove by eminent domain, the community's corpse was now to be mutilated beyond recognition."

Thanks again for including me in the issue.

Benita Howell
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tenn.

Gray Area

We were surprised, to put it mildly, to see in the spring 1996 issue of *Now & Then* that someone had been so intensely affected by one of our brochures. Such passion in response to a book of poems would be rare indeed! We can hardly quarrel with the feeling expressed, which seems quite real, but we do have some questions about the logic of the objections.

In an interview with Tal Stanley in the winter 1996 issue of *Appalachian Journal,* poet, short story writer, and essayist David Huddle took a position quite contrary to Amy Tipton Gray's. He said bluntly that he did not want to be considered an Appalachian writer, even though he was born in Ivanhoe, Va.

And then there is Emory & Henry political scientist Steve Fisher who in his soon-to-be-published essay "Appalachian Stepchild" acknowledges some of the rage Gray clearly feels at the image imposed on Appalachians by some outsiders but has doubts about his own authenticity. Although he was born in Appalachia, his family was urban rather than rural, and he left the area for some years before coming back with Ph.D. in hand. "So by what right could I call myself an Appalachian? Eventually, I decided that it just didn't matter. As Mike Maloney has put it, if your parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents were from Appalachia, then you, too, are an Appalachian, if you want to be. And I wanted to be."

A somewhat different view (and the one closest to our own) was expressed by scholar David Whisnant in the autumn 1977 issue of *Appalachian Journal:*

Letters continued on page 7

Letters to the editor should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to: Editor, *Now & Then,* East Tennessee State University, PO Box 70556, Johnson City TN 37614. Letters may be edited for length and clarity before publication.

ESSAY CONTEST WINNER

The Future as a Circle: or a Sweater and a Homestead

by Jim Minick

The 1996 Appalachian Visions Contest posed the question: What is your personal vision for the future of Appalachia?

We were fortunate to have had as our final judges Congressman **Rick Boucher** of Virginia and retired East Tennessee State University faculty member **Robert J. Higgs**, a coeditor of two important regional anthologies, *Voices from the Hills* and *Appalachia Inside Out*.

We received entries from a variety of people — both born-and-bred Appalachians and folks who have moved into the region from elsewhere. What the essays reflected, by and large, was a sense of shell shock from the changes Appalachia has experienced over the past few decades — some of which have been clearly negative, while many others have been arguably positive. "The world is so very much smaller now, and the stupefying changes continue," one writer observes. "The culture is in danger of being overcome by outside influences," another essayist says. "I fear for the future of the Appalachian region."

Jim Minick's essay, entitled "The Future as a Circle: or a Sweater and a Homestead," stood out among the entries because, says Higgs, "the essay is illustrative of an imaginative way of living — as opposed to following trodden paths of tradition on the one hand and embracing mechanical formulas of progress on the other. Very convincing in detail and tone, the piece revealed to me a wide reading knowledge of the subject combined with firsthand experience."

Three other essayists received Honorable Mentions. **Rebecca Bailey** of Morehead, Ky., wrote "The Appalachian Epistle." **Lorie Ann Hopkins** of Johnson City, Tenn., earned her honor with "The Hands of God." **Vickie R. Phipps** of Emory, Va., was the author of "Brass Knuckles and a Sewing Machine."

— JHW

My wife Sarah knits. As an eight-year-old, she watched her grandmother knit scarves — the long, straight needles flapping like wings. Soon Sarah had her own pair of wooden wings, and she, too, flew. She and her grandmother made Christmas scarves that year for her parents.

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Sarah and I live in the Virginia mountains on a homestead created in the mid-1800s. We don't know the names of the first natives or settlers who lived here, but the slate chimney from the settlers' log cabin still stands beside a few of the chestnut logs. The half-dovetail notches holding those few remaining logs fit together snugly, despite their age.

Around the turn of the century, Ira and Della Lester bought the homestead and constructed our present house. This frame structure has had extensive remodeling over the past 100 years, but the house remains solid, the pine flooring and ceiling still beautiful.

We owe much to the Lesters. This home provides us with comfort and protection. The spring they captured gives us gravity-fed water. The same garden is fertile, and

the root cellar Ira dug keeps our food cool. Though not monetarily wealthy, the Lesters invested much in this place — their energy, their creativity, their very lives.

They made mistakes, like plowing on a steep hillside, but they lived well on this land that in turn supported them, this land that now supports us and our dreams.

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As I write this, Sarah works on a sweater she has designed. The ball of yarn, a rich chocolate with a strand of red, slowly unrolls as she knits and purls with quiet, relaxed concentration. She has learned much since her grandmother taught her to knit. In college, she learned from a friend how to decipher directions for a pattern and knit a sweater. Later, another friend taught her how to create her own design, to knit a sweater for an exact fit.

One of the most important skills Sarah has learned, though, is how to use circular needles, two pointed needles of bamboo connected by a thin wisp of plastic. She prefers these over the straight sticks she first learned to use. As Jacqueline Fee explains in a knitting book entitled *The Sweater Workshop,* "A dead-end, or one-way, needle not only interrupts the rhythm of your knitting, but also the rhythm of your sweater." Instead of a sweater in one piece created by circular needles, dead-end needles create a sweater "in need of an interfering seam."

These knobbed, dead-end needles and the resultant "interfering seam" represent well the European-American tradition of linear thinking that I and many others have been taught. As a teen, I rarely thought about the past and always wanted a straight line to the future. I wanted to know immediately what career to choose and how to find happiness. This anxious desire to know the future consumed my present and left me empty and depressed.

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I am not alone in this history of fearing the future, forgetting the past, and missing circles of connection. Most of us who are of European-American descent are dependent on straight lines to delineate boundaries, to point us in the right direction, to connect us to the outside world via telephones and electricity. We like lines so much that they pervade our language and our thoughts. This very sentence must move from left to right on the page, the page edges becoming "interfering seams" we sew with our eyes as we move back to start again.

We still think linearly about time, even though a day is based on the orbit of our earth. We line out our days until the weekend, line out the years until we retire. We segment our line of time into the past, present, and future — often disconnecting the past from the future, envisioning the future in a vacuum. This view of time allows us to disconnect ourselves from each other and from place. This disconnection also caused my teenage depression. Eventually I learned to value my past, my roots in the family and on the farm where I grew up. Eventually, I also began to think about time in a different way.

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If we are to envision the "future" of Appalachia fully, we must find a different way of viewing the world. Instead of envisioning the future, we need to envision the circle, realizing that time is seamless and full of cyclic rhythms, like a sweater knit in the round.

This way of thinking, the idea of the circle, predates the line. George F. Tinker, member of the Osage Nation and professor of multicultural studies at Denver's Iliff School of Theology, said in the spring 1994 *Ecosystem Quarterly* that "History as a field of study . . . is an invention of the European intellectual tradition." I would add "the future" as an invention of this tradition also.

"History in the sense that the West has understood it . . . has not, until recently, existed for Indian people and it is imposed on us. Of course, Indian people understand the past; we tell stories of the past and pass on traditions that way. But the past is not as formative for us." He goes on to make a point that I find particularly crucial. "Our worlds are framed by a rootedness in spatiality or place much more than by time. Where time is a factor, it's always cyclical time."

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Sarah and I strive to become rooted to this place and its cycles. The phoebe's song wakes us, and the hoot owl's night call lulls us to sleep. We've gathered stories from neighbors and created stories of our own.

Like the Lesters before us, we have invested much

Ricky Cox

Jim and Sarah Minick in front of their house, 1993.

of ourselves in this place. We've rebuilt a bridge, remodeled the kitchen, and created a pond. We've cleared two acres of a field grown thick with pine and planted an acre of blueberries. Last spring, we began the slow process of helping the land heal. Over 1,000 pines and poplar trees now dot a run-down hillside, and we plan to plant over 300 nut trees there this spring.

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The costs of linear thinking surround all of us. Because we often think of the future as some distant, unconnected time, we've allowed ourselves to strip-mine whole mountains for a lump of coal and to strip-mall whole pastures for a lump of convenience.

The same lack of cyclical thinking applies to our "wastes," a term foreign to the circle. Our leaves and kitchen scraps end up in the dump instead of in our compost and, because we like a pretty package, much of our grocery store fills the county landfill.

But an even more dangerous waste, like what the government has stored at Oak Ridge, Tenn., baffles us completely. The radioactive remains of our nuclear weapons and power plants cannot be safely buried or burned or dealt with — period. This waste will outlive all of us, including our children's children. They will not thank us for this legacy.

How do we use circular needles to knit our lives into sweaters without "interfering seams"? How do we envision time as a circle so that our children's children *will* thank us?

I've struggled often with some form of this question, searching for balance, for the right place and pace, but I have found no answer. I have found, though, that to begin to understand the circle, we must love.

Sarah Minick

Jim Minick plants a tree on a slope near his house, with the help of his dogs. Planting various trees on the hillsides of the homestead is just one of the ways Minick is replenishing the land.

Like the circle of a hug, love requires connection. But in order to reach out, we must also reach in, fully loving ourselves. Self-love does not come easily, given the media images surrounding us.

If we value health instead of economic wealth, we turn off the television and seek that which promotes sound, holy living. In "Health is Membership," an essay in his recent collection, *Another Turn of the Crank,* writer and farmer Wendell Berry repeatedly shows that "'health,' in fact, comes from the same Indo-European root as 'heal,' 'whole,' and 'holy.' To be healthy is literally to be whole; to heal is to make whole."

Instead of envisioning the future, we need to envision the circle, realizing that time is seamless and full of cyclic rhythms, like a sweater knit in the round.

We should take literally that our body and the earth are temples. We all are holy.

To become fully manifested, love must reach out, must be given and received. "Love your neighbor as yourself" commands us to love ourselves and to connect with those around us. This phrase also implies that health depends on and requires community. Our current medical and economic systems oppose this as they devalue community. The medical system sticks the sick in a hospital, isolated in a room where they are treated by various specialists who rarely think holistically. In our economic system, if we want monetary wealth, we usually must give up our home communities and move to wherever the job market requires. Like a disease, separation and isolation are the norms of our society — not community, not encircling connection.

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When I graduated from high school, I had no intentions of staying at home. Tired of my small town and confining home, I wanted to explore the world on my own. I left for college and, years later, only return home for visits. Now, 300 miles from Newburg, Pa., I slowly begin to understand this disconnection, this separation.

When I was growing up, no model provided a clear path for me to see how to return home after college, and I sought no path. No one in the community had taught me how to connect my past with my future, or if they did, I had been too blind to see.

Instead, I learned to do well in a high school that didn't value my history and community; it only valued "education"

as a means to leaving. Most of my early mentors pushed me to improve the world and myself by moving away from the small town and the farm. The future was bright everywhere but in Newburg, so I had to find the brightest spot.

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We can't continue to devalue our communities by sending our children permanently away. Let them go, but encourage them to return by giving them models of how to succeed if they choose to return. Also, to ensure everyone's health, give them a broader definition of *community*.

In a recent *New Age Journal* interview entitled "Facing the Future," the Dalai Lama echoes this concern. He explains that from the Buddhist point of view, "everything depends on everything else" and that "we must overcome the isolation of our mind, we must renew our ties with the rest of the universe. Otherwise, we are lost. Lost because separate. We have to show people, indefatigably, that our interest is the interest of others, that our future is the future of others. And when I say 'others,' I'm not thinking just of human beings. I'm thinking of all the other forms of life, on this Earth and outside this Earth."

Community must include all life, not just human life. Or as Wendell Berry states in *Another Turn of the Crank,* "I believe that the community — in the fullest sense: a place and all its creatures — is the smallest unit of health and that to speak of the health of an isolated individual is a contradiction in terms."

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Sarah and I are lucky to live here, joining the circles of this community and working to improve its health. We're also lucky to join the round of many voices, to share in the singing that surrounds us.

Some examples of the circles around us: a party for a neighboring couple celebrating their fifty-fourth anniversary, the singing and dancing pulling in everyone; the phoebes' annual nest at our window; one neighbor using solar power to heat water and provide electricity; and across the county, a pair of local farmers creating a community-supported farm, their four acres of vegetables providing food for over thirty families who buy annual shares. This last example improves the health of the local economy by providing a source of locally grown, organic food and by replacing the waste generated through shipping and packaging with healthy, fresh produce.

Such an example also shows people working to improve the health of the local, nonhuman community. Since these farmers know that synthetic pesticides and fertilizers do much to harm this natural community, they avoid them, trying to understand the life in a garden and finding better ways to raise crops with the least amount of harm.

This same guiding principle applies to our farm where we work to become involved with and learn from the natural world. One way we've done this is with our irrigation system. We use a ram pump, a wonderful old invention that uses the force of water to pump the water. It requires no gasoline engine or electricity and thus creates no pollution or waste. The simple machine pumps like a heart and will probably outlast us. Because of this pump, we can soak our blueberries with water from Lost Bent Creek, even though the stream is situated 235 vertical feet below the field.

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Again, the voices in this round are many, but in order to have a "future" for Appalachia, we must change our thinking. We have to value love, health, and community on a local and global scale. We must join the circles. Appalachians have a strong tradition of planting themselves in one particular place and calling that place home. We need to continue this tradition, this fidelity of place, because it allows openings for people to see the circles of nature around and within.

But to join these circles, we need to ground our living in the concept of sustainability. How we heat, light, and cool our homes, what we drive, how we grow our food, and how we pass on our culture must change. All of these and more need to become sustaining ventures, like our ram pump, instead of depleting ones, like our Ford truck.

To guarantee sustainability, our economics must change so that we value community health more than individual wealth. This involves questioning much: our tools, our technology, and even how we design our communities. Our cities cannot be so overcrowded nor can our villages be ghost towns. We must find the balance, a healthy size. Appalachia, with its diverse geography and small cities, seems like an ideal place to start.

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This spring, Sarah and I will join several more circles of this community. For starters, we're planting an orchard. The original orchard that the Lesters planted has all died out, except for three diseased apple trees. To replenish this, we've ordered eighteen fruit and nut trees.

Courtesy of Martha Lester

The homestead in 1942, shown with the surrounding outbuildings.

Many of these are new varieties resistant to common orchard problems. By planting them, we'll reduce our spraying and continue the tradition of healthy self-sufficiency.

Another circle comes with Sarah's knitting. She recently discovered a couple near us who raise sheep and Angora goats. They also spin and dye the wool. By purchasing wool from them, she'll improve the local economy and make some friends as well. She'll also get to play with the newborn lambs and kids.

Next month, we will dig into our garden to plant potatoes. Sarah has already started broccoli, cabbage, and lettuce in the kitchen, each a tiny miracle of a seed germinating into a plant. Through the season, as we dig and plant, weed and harvest, we'll burn our bodies' energy; yet, through these activities, through nurturing a small plot of earth, we'll replenish this expended energy. We will join fully the circles within and around us. And in the act of touching soil, we might recognize another circle and begin to understand what we mean when we say "from dust to dust." N&T

Jim Minick teaches English at Radford University in Radford, Va. His poetry, essays, and fiction have been widely published.

In spite of his busy teaching schedule at Radford University in Virginia, Jim Minick still finds time to write essays and poetry. He has been published in *Now & Then, Greenprints, Appalachian Heritage, Appalachian Journal, Appalachian Voices,* and *RU Magazine.*

After graduating from high school in Shippensburg, Pa., Jim attended Lycoming College in Williamsport, Pa. He received his B.A. in English and taught high school for three years in Maryland before deciding to go on to graduate school. He received his M.A. in English from Radford University and stayed on there as a professor and as a mentor for graduate students.

In addition to teaching, Jim created and is in charge of the Appalachian Teachers' Network. This is a network of teachers who hold a yearly conference for kindergarten through college level educators interested in incorporating Appalachian studies into their classrooms. The Network also publishes an annual newsletter called *Stitches.* In between working and writing, Jim has time for his more leisurely pursuits. He and Sarah work in the garden and on their pick-your-own blueberry farm. They also hike, bicycle, and keep an eye on the phoebes.

— Meredith L. Scarbrough

Meredith Scarbrough is a summer intern with Now & Then. *She is a student at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City.*

Letters . . .

(Continued from page 2)

"What matters is not the site of one's conception and birth, or one's present mailing address, or the pattern of one's movements during the preceding decade, but rather the depth of one's sympathy, the quality of one's commitment, the clarity of one's vision, the validity of one's ideas, and the actual results of one's efforts. The Appalachian struggle will come of age when it loses its present unfortunate tinge of paranoia and xenophobia, and declares itself open and receptive to everyone who understands and supports the struggle of oppressed people everywhere to live decent lives."

If we believe that, you may say — as Amy Tipton Gray does — that we should have simply published the book in question without justification. Our main purpose was not to claim Appalachian "rights" but rather to assert that we are a regional press and do not accept manuscripts from outside the region loosely defined as Appalachia, or more precisely, perhaps, the Upper South.

With so many disparate views being held by Appalachians, you could provide a real service by a full airing on the subject of identity. We, in the meantime, will keep our musings to ourselves and continue to publish two or three poetry books a year by regional poets.

Ann Richman
Larry K. Richman
The Sow's Ear Press
Abingdon, Va.

Amy Tipton Gray was right to resist the idea of publishing "On Being Appalachian." What was, I'm sure, just a harmless joke when it existed only in the form of a letter to a friend becomes something petty and wrong-headed committed to the cold formality of print.

If an author with "ancestral ties to Eastern Kentucky," "an upbringing in North Georgia," and a deep love for the region claims to be Appalachian, where in the world is the offense? The "Un-Named Poet" is surely not to blame for Amy Tipton Gray's "permanent case of the head spins" about regional identity.

John Wright
Evanston, Ill.

De-Mobilizing Appalachia

Will Appalachians of the future be able to get ahead while staying put?

On the handsome, brightly-colored cover of a brochure put out by the Kentucky Rural Economic Development Center in Somerset, Ky., is an image of four well-scrubbed children gazing solemnly at a rather large globe. Also featured prominently is a quote from U.S. Rep. Harold Rogers, a Republican from Kentucky. "We're setting a daring goal," proclaims Rogers. "No young person will need to leave home to find his or her future."

Just how realistic an aspiration is this for Appalachia's young people?

Answering this seemingly straightforward question is not easy. Individual states and federal agencies such as the Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis do projections from which a picture of the probable future could be laboriously pieced together. However, no one has done an economic forecast for the entire Appalachian region. Appalachia is currently comprised of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states from southern New York down along the mountain chain to northern Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia.

To be sure, there is the Washington, D.C.-based Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). Congress charged the ARC in 1965 with working in partnership with Appalachian states to foster the development needed to alleviate the region's alarming poverty. The ARC has, from time to time, commissioned research reports from experts such as economist and planner Andrew Isserman of West Virginia University. Studies such as Isserman's 1995 *Appalachia Then and Now,* for example, gauge how far Appalachia has come in its effort to share in the country's affluence.

Such reports collect data from the recent past and compare the figures against national averages. In the first place, the ARC no longer has the funding to hire staff economists who can generate forecasts for the whole region, but ARC staff members feel that even if they did, the picture that would probably emerge from such an exercise would be distorted due to the growing economic diversification throughout Appalachia.

"We have in our country this great belief in mobility. We have defined people who didn't get up and go as failures somehow."

In lieu of projections with numbers attached, *Now & Then* turned to several individuals long involved in regional affairs to get their perceptions about the future fortunes of Appalachia. Those individuals include Isserman, director of West Virginia University's Regional Research Institute in Morgantown, W. Va.; Helen Lewis, on the education staff of the Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, Tenn.; and Ron Eller, the University of Kentucky's Appalachian Center director in Lexington, Ky.

The Best People Leave?

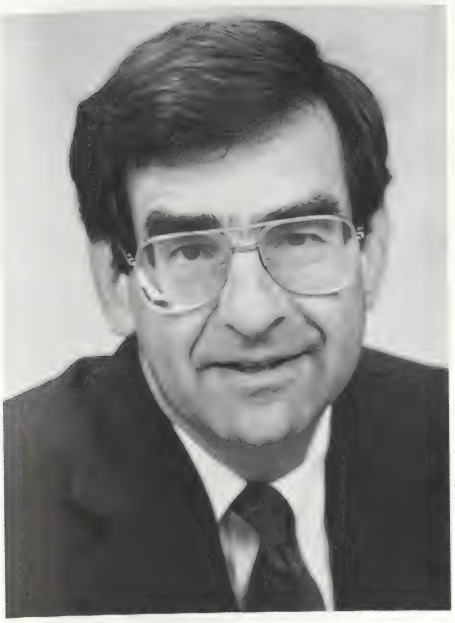
For many Americans, Rogers' goal may not seem daring as much as a little puzzling. As Georgia-born sociologist Lewis acknowledges, "We have in our country this great belief in mobility. We have defined people who didn't get up and go as failures somehow. They are people who are not ambitious or daring or creative enough. The best people leave." But Lewis doesn't hold with that line of thinking; she especially finds fault with relying on a geographic cure to economic woes these days when no areas can promise certain, long-term employment.

Appalachians are probably more likely to put down serious roots than other Americans. As historian Eller says, "I think if any of the Appalachian values have endured, they are the values of family and of community." When Eller speaks at high schools, he finds that the majority of students say they would prefer to stay near home after graduation — if only there were employment.

Despite strong connections to family and home, Eller notes that "our history has been one where in order to survive economically, our young people have had to leave." The most recent wave of outmigration in the 1980s, which mainly affected Eastern Kentucky and West Virginia, resulted from upheavals in the U.S.'s economy as it was transformed from an industrial to a service-based economy.

The shake-out was most pronounced in mature industries such as coal, steel, and textiles, important employers in many Appalachian communities. According to sociologist Richard Cuoto in *An American Challenge,* 26 percent of the U.S. labor force in 1970 was in manufacturing. Almost 34 percent of Appalachian workers held down manufacturing jobs during the same period. By 1980, manufacturing jobs had declined in the Eastern mountains at a

Jane Harris Woodside



West Virginia University

Andrew Isserman

rate of approximately 31 percent, while they dropped by only 21 percent in the rest of the country. So Appalachia was hit harder and hit earlier by this restructuring of the national economy.

Isserman, however, manages to see a bright side to these recent grim trends. "We've gone through the major shocks," he insists. "The three subregions of Appalachia — Northern, Central, and Southern — were textbook examples of regions in decline. The Rust Belt in the North was a classic case of a manufacturing area that got old. In Central Appalachia, while we do still have the coal mining industry, it's not the very labor intensive, dangerous industry we had before. In Southern Appalachia, we had a played-out, poor farming area.

"But Appalachia is not those things any more," he insists. "We no longer have an industrial structure that is so specialized and therefore so vulnerable. Few communities are dependent on very large, labor intensive production facilities, like steel plants or coal mines, that employ a whole town's worth of labor force. We've made the transition to look like the rest of the country, and I think we'll continue to look more like the country as a whole."

Eller agrees that there is far greater diversity in the Appalachian economy today than in the past. "That trend will clearly continue," he says. "We are much less dependent upon extractive resources, especially coal." The flourishing communities in the region have diversified their economic bases, blending together jobs drawn from economic sectors such as telecommunications and agriculture, entertainment and banking, small business, health care, and education. These relatively more prosperous communities also tend to have taken advantage of the global economy by attracting foreign plants to their home towns.

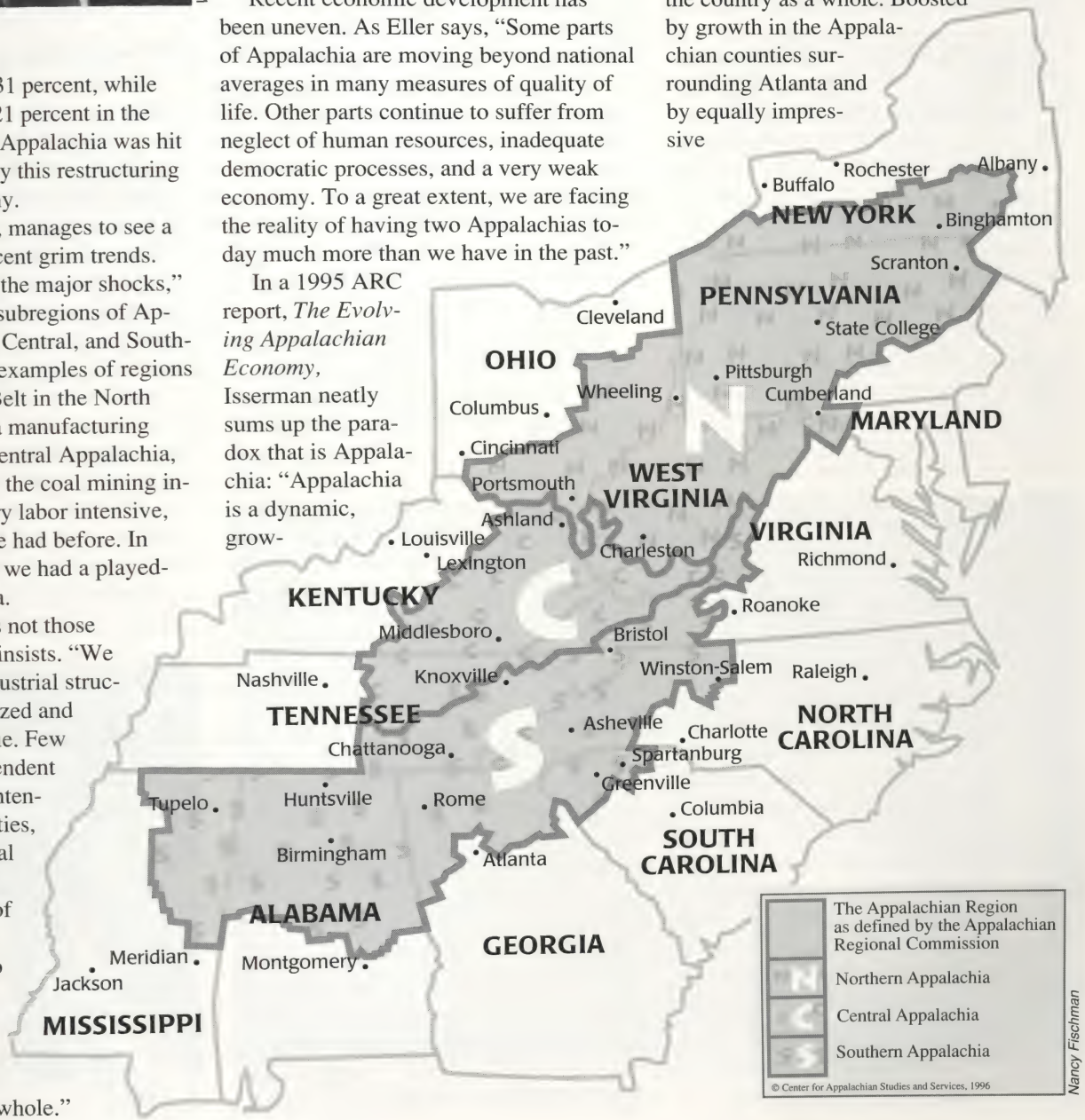
Mixed Blessings

Recent economic development has been uneven. As Eller says, "Some parts of Appalachia are moving beyond national averages in many measures of quality of life. Other parts continue to suffer from neglect of human resources, inadequate democratic processes, and a very weak economy. To a great extent, we are facing the reality of having two Appalachias today much more than we have in the past."

In a 1995 ARC report, *The Evolving Appalachian Economy,* Isserman neatly sums up the paradox that is Appalachia: "Appalachia is a dynamic, growing region that contains some of the poorest areas in the nation."

In the mid-1960s, the so-called Rust Belt of Northern Appalachia was relatively well-off, with a per capita income that was 85 percent of the national average. During the past three decades, however, Northern Appalachia has stagnated or lost ground. According to Isserman, between 1988 and 1993, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and parts of West Virginia displayed the most sluggish growth in new jobs in the region, while the per capita income in this part of the region remains at 85 percent of the nation's.

In contrast, both the metropolitan and rural areas of Southern and Central Appalachia displayed healthier job growth than the country as a whole. Boosted by growth in the Appalachian counties surrounding Atlanta and by equally impressive



Nancy Fischman

gains in and around Dalton, Ga., an area with a highly diversified economy, Southern Appalachia is in fact close to taking Northern Appalachia's place as the region's best performer. Its per capita income as a percentage of the national average grew from 73 percent in 1988 to 83 percent in 1992.

"To a great extent, we are facing the reality of having two Appalachias today much more than we have in the past."

Even though Central Appalachia has experienced greater economic growth than its neighbors to the north, it is still a region in deep trouble. For example, its per capita income climbed to 67 percent of the nation's in 1992 from only 56 percent in 1969; its 1990 rural poverty rate was still an appalling 24 percent, substantially above the region's rate of 16 percent in 1990 and the nation's rate of 14 percent.

Isserman stresses that Central Appalachia is the poorest subregion in part because it is the most rural one. Nationally, rural areas have only three-quarters of the U.S. per capita income level, and Appalachia is no different. Almost one-quarter of the Appalachian population now lives in metropolitan areas of 250,000 or more, which tend to have higher per capita incomes, but Central Appalachia has no such metropolitan areas. Today, Central Appalachia accounts for less than 10 percent of the Appalachian population.

Eller traces the causes of the subregion's continuing woes to the fact that "Central Appalachia remains more closely tied to single, extractive industries than other areas of the region." Lewis, who has long worked with Central Appalachian communities, believes that the root cause of the subregion's continued depressed state lies in land ownership patterns. "In most of the coal counties, 60 to 80 percent of the land and minerals are owned by these large coal corporations. They're still getting coal and gas out and will probably develop other techniques to go further into the deeper coal seams which they cannot mine with current technology, but it won't mean much employment any more. Land reform has got to be really looked at seriously."

The Americanization of Appalachia

When Eller looks within the subregions, he detects even further disparities. "There is a very visible physical gap beginning to appear between growth centers in Appalachia and the more remote rural areas," he points out. According to Eller, job growth in recent years has tended to be in communities such as Asheville, N.C.; Knoxville, Tenn.; Dalton, Ga.; Pikeville and the London-Corbin corridor in Eastern Kentucky; Charleston and Beckley in West Virginia; the Pittsburgh, Pa.-Morgantown, W.Va. area; and Binghamton, N.Y. They are communities located at the intersections of major highways, many built with ARC funds. "Many of the most persistently poor areas of the mountains are your remote rural communities — your old agricultural, mining and timber communities. They have not shared proportionately in the development that has occurred in the region over the last 30 years."

Lewis agrees. "We argued for a long time that the ARC's building all these roads wasn't going to work. But if you take a look, it *has* worked to some extent. That's where the growth has been, along these corridors and interstates." This pattern of growth was the result of an ARC policy which until recently emphasized cultivating growth centers as the most efficient way of bringing services to and fostering development in the region as a whole. "So they poured resources into places like Hazard, Ky.," says Lewis. "Hazard now has this big medical center and all these shopping centers, but there hasn't been an effort to *decentralize,* to put resources into smaller communities."

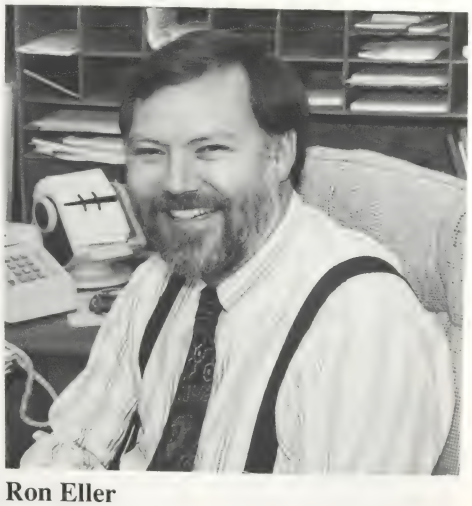
This ARC policy seems to be changing, as evidenced by its latest strategic plan and by federal co-chair Jesse White Jr.'s recent statements emphasizing the agency's role in providing local communities with the tools that can help them become self-sufficient. Still, the policy which fostered urban development in the region at the expense of rural development has been in place for decades. "The Americanization of Appalachia" is what

Tee A. Corinne

Helen Lewis

Eller calls this development strategy. "The same kind of phenomenon is happening everywhere," he points out. "We see rural communities struggling and on the decline nationally."

One of the trends that causes Eller great concern is a growing income gap between the mountain middle class and the mountain working class and poor. The mountain middle class is made up of people with the skills and education to participate in the emerging global economy and to take advantage of the new high-tech information age. The mountain working class and poor, on the other hand, are still tied to the old industrial economy, an economy which increasingly has moved plants abroad to countries with cheaper labor markets. Eller sees signs of this growing gap throughout the region, but especially in



Tim Collins

Ron Eller

Central Appalachian communities in Eastern Kentucky, Southwest Virginia, the Cumberland Plateau portions of East Tennessee, and Southern West Virginia.

Once again, he sees this growing gulf as part of a national trend precipitated by the country's recent economic restructuring. According to Eller, the mountain

"We've made the transition to look like the rest of the country, and I think we'll continue to look more like the country as a whole."

middle class is characterized by markedly higher education levels. "The gap is to a great degree related to the failure of the region's educational system to provide low income and poor people with equal opportunities to participate in the new economy. It's a failure of many state and federal programs to direct resources, job training, and entrepreneurship opportunities toward low income and working class people."

Good Jobs

And where does all of this leave the young Appalachian about to enter the job market?

Economist Isserman is the most optimistic of the regional observers polled. He even manages to sound hopeful about Central Appalachia, although he acknowledges that the area has serious and persistent problems that need to be addressed in a serious, sustained way. But he also points out that "statistics that measure poverty levels and educational attainment basically show us an old history. It can take a generation or two for measures such as educational attainment to improve. And it's in these measures of distress, as some people call them, that Central Appalachia jumps out as being one of the worst-off places in the country.

"But in terms of growth, that area is now looking good. It's growing in terms of jobs and population. What we're seeing is not a Central Appalachia that is poorly off and declining. We're seeing it as poorly off, but improving."

To return to the original question: Will a young Appalachian be able to build his or her future without leaving home? On balance, Isserman believes it will be possible. "It partly depends on the geographic scale," he allows. "But we're not a declining, slow growing part of the country, and that implies there's opportunity."

He supports his opinion by citing the findings of his report, *The Evolving Appalachian Economy*. He began by defining "good job industries" as those where the average pay was over the national median of $23,239 and which were adding at least 5,000 jobs a year nationally between 1988 and 1992. He found that 54 industries — industries such as health care, commercial banks, and cable and pay TV services — met this dual criteria.

Says Isserman, "I did this analysis because I think the image in lots of our minds is that we are losing jobs in coal mining and manufacturing that paid well and that the only substitutes are minimum wage jobs, like working at McDonald's or making pizzas. So I defined 'good job' industries, then asked, 'Are they present in Appalachia?'

"And in fact, they are. It turns out that while there are certainly not enough of them, there are lots of these good jobs in Appalachia, 1.6 million of them in 1992. They account for about 16 percent of the Appalachian economy, lagging only slightly behind the nation where such jobs account for 18 percent."

Creating Livelihoods

Lewis sounds skeptical about Isserman's findings. "If you look at Big Stone Gap and Wise County in Virginia last year, they lost 1,100 jobs. Those jobs were all union miners, and they were making $50,000 or $60,000 a year. Many of those men are now doing consumer survey work for $5 an hour. I'm sure there are some better jobs, but wages for all workers have dropped in the last 10 to 15 years because of the change from a manufacturing to a service economy.

"I range from great optimism to great pessimism," Lewis remarks. She is encouraged by the growing civic activism she finds, especially in economically depressed Central Appalachian communities. Still, she admits, "I would hate to be this high school kid graduating right now, trying to figure out where to go to get a job. Changes in labor markets all over the country are making more and more of the work temporary or contract so that you never have a stable job.

"Instead of training for a job that's going to be there waiting for you, I think the next generation is going to have to make their own jobs, their own ways of making a livelihood. I think we've got to educate young people more about the interrelationships between people and the land. The

R. Wes Brown. Courtesy of the Charlotte (N.C.) Chamber of Commerce

Charlotte, N.C., with its ties to national and international economies, is held up as a model for many crossroads growth centers in the Appalachian region.

next generation is going to have to find ways of being creative, to look for things that they can do to help build a community and not to just survive, but to live well."

Risking Your Soul

According to Eller, being able to give young people the option to remain in their home communities depends upon the region's ability to create sustainable economic environments, ones which do not deplete the natural or human resources upon which they are based. Sustainable regional communities would look quite different from the crossroads growth centers that have flourished during the past several decades. "I think that what the crossroads growth centers are doing is tying themselves much more directly to the national and international economies. They are creating an environment that is similar to urban areas outside of the region, where place is not something that is valued and community means something very different," says Eller.

"One of the questions I always put to community groups in Appalachia is 'What kind of community do you want to be?' If they in fact are trying to become another Charlotte, N.C. — which is what many of the crossroads communities do want to be — then they're aspiring to live in a very different place from the traditional rural, place-oriented community we associate with Appalachia. To become a Charlotte may mean giving up those values of rootedness and of place that are associated with the region.

"So one of the questions continues to be whether we can grow and not lose who we are, not lose those human values. I think the answer is to develop in a way that is distinct and unique to mountain communities. The answer does not rest in modeling our development on other areas of the country which might appear to have certain material advantages but which have, to a great degree, lost their soul."

However, after having given voice to his apprehensions, Eller can still find reason for hope. "If anyone in America can achieve Congressman Rogers' goal," he asserts, "it will be people from the Appalachian region." N&T

Jane Harris Woodside edits Now & Then. *She is coeditor with Susan Spalding of* Communities in Motion, *a book of essays on vernacular dance.*

The Aging Face of Migration

Color the future of at least some Appalachian communities in shades of gray and silver.

"Elderly migration is one of several trends leading to increasing economic diversity in the region," says Graham Rowles, associate director of the University of Kentucky's (UK) Sanders-Brown Center on Aging in Lexington. "You've got retirement destinations in Appalachia which are potential growth areas."

At the Appalachian Regional Commission's request, Rowles and UK geography department's John Watkins have taken a close look at some of the elderly migration "islands" in the region. These studies attempted to understand the impact of elderly migration on the Appalachian communities where it has already occurred and to explore whether courting retirees might be a viable economic strategy for some areas.

"Over the last couple of decades, there's been a shift nationwide in the way in which the elderly move," notes Rowles, a London-born geographer. Previously, the elderly concentrated in well-known retirement spots such as Florida and Arizona. Today, retirees are increasingly settling closer to home in communities which had served as weekend-getaways during their working lives. A handful of locations within Appalachia are emerging as retiree destinations, areas such as Eastern Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains; West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle; Tennessee's Cumberland County; portions of South Carolina; Gwinnett County, just outside of Atlanta; and northeastern Alabama.

Relatively few Appalachian communities will experience a substantial influx of the elderly. Northern Appalachia is in fact losing more older citizens than it gains. But as the list of "islands" suggests, parts of Southern and Central Appalachia have seen significant increases of older residents, especially among the "young-old," those between 65 and 74. "It's important to realize when you're dealing with small rural communities that, although the numbers may not be great, the impact can be considerable," Rowles points out.

Hendersonville, N.C.

All retirees are not created equal. For example, what is one of the best-known Appalachian retirement boom areas, the one centered around Hendersonville, N.C., has been a magnet for "amenity" retirees since the 1960s. Located in the mountains about 20 miles south of Asheville, Henderson County has experienced an 18 percent increase in the general population between 1980 and 1990; the number of citizens 65 and older for the same period grew by 46 percent. Planners predict that the area will net another 2,000 retirees between 1990 and the year 2000.

The new residents come from all over the U.S., but especially from Eastern seaboard cities. "These amenity retirees are married, relatively healthy upper income folks who want a leisurely lifestyle," says Rowles. He describes a newsstand a block off Hendersonville's Main Street where elderly men congregate on outside benches as they do in front of country stores in many parts of the region. Inside, though, patrons are perusing the *Wall Street Journal, PC World,* and *The New York Times.* "In a sense, what they're trying to simulate is a sort of affluent, pseudo-rurality."

When retirees come to town, they don't arrive empty handed. They transfer their assets to local banks and spend retirement incomes in local businesses. "We're talking millions and millions of dollars," Rowles reports. "It's a real economic boon." For example, the local Chamber of Commerce estimates that each year more than $135 million in Social Security payments are received by county residents.

"The retirees are coming from places like New York City and Washington, D.C., and they have expectations for services, medical resources, and cultural amenities that lead to a transformation of the local culture and economy," says Rowles. As Watkins points out, Hendersonville now has a service and retiree-based economy. On the positive side, Hendersonville, a community with a population of a little over 7,000, has its own symphony orchestra, a first-rate li-

brary, a summer playhouse, a well-equipped hospital, over 100 physicians in the county, a private airport with hangar space for scores of private planes, an abundance of elderly volunteers, and plenty of restaurants and golf courses.

On the other hand, Hendersonville now also has a serious traffic congestion problem, especially when seasonal visitors arrive. Even more importantly, as the retirees from high cost-of-living areas move to rural North Carolina, they often build expensive homes to avoid paying capital gains tax, pushing some people, especially first-time buyers, out of the market. And although new jobs are being created, many of those jobs are low-paying service jobs, such as working in restaurants and mowing lawns. "So if you look at Hendersonville as the region's success story, in some senses they have been too successful," Rowles concludes.

Courtesy of The Green Company, Hendersonville, N.C.

Custom homes, such as this one under construction, have become more in demand in the Hendersonville, N.C., area.

Somerset, Ky.

Somerset, Ky., and the surrounding Pulaski County are attracting a somewhat different strain of amenity retirees. Located about 70 miles south of Lexington in the Lake Cumberland area, Somerset is the largest town in what has become a thriving recreational area since the lake's creation in 1951. Summer vacationers, as many as 250,000 per weekend, come principally from the north, from Lexington and Louisville and from industrial areas of Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. After retirement, many of these vacationers decide to stay for good. It has been estimated by city officials that approximately 50 percent of the people moving into the town of Somerset are retirement age.

"These people are looking for different things than the people in Hendersonville," says Rowles. "The people who come to the Somerset area are much more interested in the natural amenities than they are in great restaurants and symphony orchestras. They want to retire in the countryside and live a bucolic life. What they essentially want to do is to close the door behind them."

Consequently, these newcomers often become staunch, highly vocal environmentalists who tend to be less than enthusiastic when local leaders try to attract industries designed to provide jobs for the community's young people. The retirees' opposition to anything resembling the kinds of industries they left behind in the Midwest leaves many Somerset civic leaders, who are intent on creating an economy balanced between light industry and services for retirees, feeling somewhat ambivalent about elderly migration.

Hazard, Ky.

Over in Hazard, Ky., located about 70 miles northeast of Somerset in the economically depressed Eastern Kentucky coal fields, at least some local leaders would welcome elderly migrants. However, the area is currently experiencing a net loss of older people. Located in a steeply sided valley, Hazard's hopes of becoming a migrant center are hampered by the dearth of flat land suitable for retirement housing construction and the area's general lack of amenities, although that may be changing, as the recent expansion of Hazard Community College's facilities and the construction of the 208-bed ARH Regional Medical Center attest.

Observes Rowles, "It's a lot easier to sell Hendersonville than it is to sell Hazard — unless you sell it to return migrants." That is precisely what Rowles and Watkins suggested Hazard consider doing: basically to capitalize on the fact that during the 1940s and 1950s, many young people left the area to find work in upper Midwest cities such as Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Detroit. They may have left home, but they often didn't sever family or community ties, as evidenced by the fact that roughly 20 percent of subscribers to the local paper live out-of-state. Now approaching retirement age, many of these out-migrants are looking to come home to the mountains. "These return migrants have lower incomes than amenity migrants," Rowles concedes, "but their incomes are usually higher than the local people's, so it's still beneficial to local communities to try and attract them."

Through the turn of the century, the available supply of older migrants will dwindle as people born during the low birthrate Depression era begin to enter their 60s and 70s. But then around 2010, Baby Boomers will start reaching their golden years. At that point, Rowles predicts, "the communities which have already established themselves as retirement centers will have a distinct advantage."

Still, communities which make the attraction of retiree migrants part of their economic development strategy must do so with their eyes wide open, advises Rowles. They need to understand exactly which retiree segment they are most likely to attract and to recognize that their arrival will bring costs as well as benefits. Most of all, communities need to remember that every amenity or return migrant has the potential to become a "migrant-for-assistance" one day, one of the frail elderly who need various types of aid. As Rowles puts it, "If you're 65, you have an alarming propensity 10 years later on to be 75 — and 10 years after that, to be 85. Communities need to be sure to plan long-term care for these folks in the future."

— JHW

Do People in Appalachia Know They're Appalachians?

Ron Eller
Appalachian Center
University of Kentucky

Thirty years ago, there was very little consciousness of being Appalachian. I grew up in Southern West Virginia. My people have lived there for 200 years, and we didn't know what Appalachia was.

But over the last 30 years, for a variety of reasons, there has emerged a very strong regional consciousness. I think that consciousness has helped to bind communities together within the region and, increasingly, across state lines. Today, we have a much greater tendency for communities in West Virginia to recognize that they have similarities with rural communities in Western North Carolina and Eastern Kentucky and Southeast Ohio.

People are much more comfortable with working across state borders within Appalachia than they were before. I spend about half of my time at multi-state meetings working on various public policy issues, whether it's health care, economic development, or higher education. And I think that's a very positive sign of growing regional consciousness and cooperation.

In part, this growing willingness to cooperate is a result of the region being tied together by the Appalachian Regional Commission. In part, it's a product of the growth of regional consciousness that has been spurred by the Appalachian Studies movement and all of the work that regional scholars and artists have engaged in over the last 30 years to create a sense of regional community here. I see that continuing.

Andrew Isserman
Regional Research Institute
West Virginia University

I find that people identify with their state and their county much more than they do with Appalachia. In fact, I've been told by many of my students that they don't consider themselves Appalachians. Appalachians are always people from further down South.

Well, what is Appalachia, really? It's a mountain range, right? It's also this official region that the Appalachian Regional Commission defined 30 years ago as stretching from New York to Mississippi. It's a strip of the East Coast. So it's almost as if you were asking people from Oregon and from Arizona what they think they have in common. I guess they realize they're Westerners, but there are big differences in the situations they face.

My own observation is that what people think of as Appalachia is primarily Central Appalachia. That's the area that fits their image of the region. But then, I've also met people from Central Appalachia who say, "I'm from a certain county." So I don't know. I've yet to meet a person who's told me that he or she is an Appalachian.

I don't think that Congress was wrong, however, when they established the Appalachian Regional Commission back in 1965. Indeed, the region consisted of places which were somewhat isolated and which stood to benefit from this kind of regional development. But it certainly looks as if for large parts of that region as it was defined 30 years ago, the job's been done. With the exception of Central Appalachia, there are now other parts of the country — the Mississippi Delta, for example — that stand out as being worse off than Appalachia.

Helen Lewis
Highlander Research & Education Center

I didn't know I was an Appalachian until the Appalachian Regional Commission came along and told us all that we were. And I remember calling my mother in North Georgia about that time, and she said, "Guess what? We're sort of Appalachian."

I think people who've lived in the mountains have always felt some separateness. I think people identify more with their state and with being from the mountains. I always grew up saying I was from North Georgia — and making it very clear that it was *North* Georgia. People used terms like "mountain people" and "highlanders," based on all the Scottish ancestry.

The Appalachian Regional Commission, along with the Appalachian Studies movement and all the various kinds of networking that have gone on in the mountains, has produced a very strong Appalachian identity movement and a cultural movement from the mid-1960s until today. I can remember in the 1950s, there was almost no emphasis on local music, and there were no local festivals. I think Galax might have been going on at the time, but there were very few. But festivals are all over the place now — "Appalachian Days" and all of these "Pioneer Days." They encourage a sense of identity.

The negative stereotypes, of course, are still quite clear and lively in a lot of articles you read about the region. They make kids ashamed of the way they talk and make them want to get out of here as fast as they can. But I think there sure is a lot less of that than there was in the 1950s.

I don't know where that cultural movement is going — whether it's going to fizzle out. But I think it's still growing, really — as more new writers and poets come out of the region.

— JHW

Virginia's On-Ramp to the Information Superhighway

Internet has come into its own in the last few years. In many Appalachian communities, as elsewhere, people can access information from all over the world on their personal computers. But in most cases, talking to the florist around the corner or the grocery store clerk down the street still requires an old-fashioned phone call — unless you live in Blacksburg, Va., that is.

The Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV), a community-wide Internet network, has been in place since 1993 (see sidebar, p. 17). The BEV was first dreamed up in early 1991. Virginia Tech had a campus-wide network that linked students, faculty, and staff to each other, but it was for on-campus users only. Tech began looking for a way to stretch this campus link to include off-campus housing and offices as well.

Photo courtesy of Virginia Tech Media Center

A surprising change of pace — a student at Margaret Beeks Elementary School in Blacksburg, Va., gives BEV director Andrew Cohill a computer lesson.

It just so happened that while Tech was searching for a way to bring computer access to more people, Bell Atlantic of Virginia was looking for something also: a community in which to start a revolutionary approach to the Internet.

John Knapp, director of external affairs for Bell Atlantic, says that starting the BEV turned out to be a good move for them, as well as for Blacksburg, because the Internet has become so popular over the last few years.

"When we first began seriously thinking about this project," Knapp said, "we thought that the kinds of services you can get over the Internet would be something that people would want in the future.

"Blacksburg was — and still is — the precursor to things in the future because of Virginia Tech. The degree of computer literacy in Blacksburg is high, and the town is always one step ahead of its time. A new application of the Internet would help us understand what the rest of the world would be like in the future, and we thought Blacksburg was the best place to start."

Virginia Tech and Bell Atlantic (then C&P Telephone) joined with Blacksburg, a small town with a population of 36,000 of which 24,000 are Tech students, to create an unprecedented marvel — Internet access for every citizen in town. More specifically, the BEV expanded access not only to Tech personnel as they worked at their home computers but also to business people, artists, musicians, school children, shop owners, and many others. According to BEV director Andrew Cohill, both Tech and Blacksburg saw in the project the potential to stimulate economic development in the community. In fact, since the start of the project, more than 10 new Internet-related companies and more than 60 new jobs have been created.

The fledgling project spent the next two years planning the details and getting the town "wired" for the Internet. Digital equipment was installed in many areas of town, including Tech's campus as well as office buildings, businesses, and about 500 off-campus apartments. Finally, the first edition of BEV software was distributed, and the Internet craze began.

Today, a Blacksburg resident can use the BEV to do almost anything and everything on-line. In fact, the BEV uses the Internet to tell its own story. Just enter http://www.bev.net to get its home page, and read its own account of its short but productive life.

For the first two years of the project, Tech provided access through the BEV/Virginia Tech modem pool. Cost was low, ranging from free access at the public library to around $30 per month, depending on the access method (modem or direct Ethernet connections, which do not require a modem). Tech provided this service, Cohill says, in order to establish the fact that there was a market for Internet services. But Tech always planned to bow out. In due course, the university figured, private Internet service providers would see the potential and begin competing for modem customers.

The BEV is a basic Internet connection, but because the project involved a concerted effort to put a whole host of public and private entities on-line, the BEV is a world of cyberspace wonders. A retired couple can check the calendar for community events, including plays, outdoor concerts, and pic-

by Meredith L. Scarbrough

nics. A sweetheart can order flowers to be delivered in Blacksburg or to anywhere in the world. Parents can check on their child's progress in school and receive grade reports from the teacher. That same child can talk to another student in Colorado or even Colombia. A family can ask policemen to keep an eye on their house while they're on vacation — and that's just the beginning. There is almost no limit to what a Blacksburg resident can do on-line, but it did take a little time for the town to get used to this easy access to the world as well as to the local flower shops.

Photo courtesy of Virginia Tech Media Center

Characters from Busch Gardens theme park, a sponsor of the effort to bring the BEV into area schools, seem to watch in awe as school children play on the Internet.

According to the on-line information packet about the BEV, every problem that the BEV has encountered since it officially opened its doors has been related to people's understanding of the technology, not to the technology itself. The BEV found that it had to instruct local town and county government officials about the Net and how it might be used to provide better services to the citizens. It also had to demonstrate to local civic groups how publicizing their activities on the Net could increase attendance at their functions. The BEV had to inform consumers about the value of having the network connection in their homes and how it could offer them better control over their time and expand their interactions with family, friends, and other people in the community. The BEV educated public school administrators and teachers about the value of having a network connection in the classroom. And finally, it showed business people how the network might help them serve existing customers better and find new ones more easily.

Once people received information about the Net and how to use it to its full potential, there was no stopping them. Currently, surveys show that 70 percent of homes in this college town have personal computers; 40 percent of homes with personal computers are connected to the BEV. The BEV estimates that it has approximately 17,000 users, of which the majority are either students or employees of the university. Each day, according to the BEV, the site has been visited 120,000 times by local users and 110,000 times by people from outside Montgomery County. The Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library holds training sessions as well, and because of their free introductory sessions, demonstrations, overviews, and group training, the library staff has instructed about 1,500 people on how to make the best use of the BEV.

Walter Zicko, a computer technician at the Blacksburg branch of the library, says that the Internet terminals at all three branches — Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Floyd — stay busy. There are a total of nine terminals in these branches for Internet use only, and Zicko says that all of these terminals actually have waiting lists for people to use them.

"People use the BEV for all kinds of things. A lot of people just like to browse for entertainment purposes and to see what's going on. Others are doing personal research, and still others have e-mail accounts," says Zicko.

He attributes the heavy use to two things. The national Internet craze is one factor, but he views the concentration of Blacksburg information on the Internet as crucial to the BEV's growth.

"About two years ago, when all this got started, the community changed," says Zicko. "There was almost no knowledge about the Internet, other than among academics, but people in Blacksburg paid attention to this once it got started. People were seeing themselves and the town on the news and wanted to get involved with this. They still are involved because they have free access through the library."

Bell Atlantic is still involved with the project as well. Through the Blacksburg experience, Knapp says, they have learned a great deal about the Internet and what is possible with it. In fact, Bell Atlantic is currently making a technology, formerly available only to businesses, a new service to residential areas as well. The Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) allows faster and easier access to the Internet from home via digital phone lines (no modem needed), thus making the Internet appealing to more people. Indeed, Bell Atlantic is trying to roll their Internet market out over their entire area, blanketing Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware with the new technology.

And now that the BEV is off and running, private modem pools are entering the picture. On July 1, 1996, use of the original Tech/BEV modem pool was made available only to Tech faculty, staff, and students. Now, non-university users must depend on local modem pool providers for their connections. Bell Atlantic hopes to be among these, along with the New River Valley modem pool.

The Blacksburg Electronic Village seems to be a model of advancement for rural Appalachia. The only question now seems to be just how far Blacksburg and its electronic village can go. The answer may be found in future history books — not on black-and-white printed pages, but on the softly glowing computer pages of the Internet. N&T

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How the Net Networks

by Scott J. Patterson

What is this "new" communication technology? The cornerstone of the communication technology that makes Internet, e-mail, and electronic villages possible is an innovation called digitization. Most of the communication technology we use today is based on what electricians call an analog signal. Your telephone, television, record player, and radio are all analog machines.

But today's computers can take pictures, sounds (including speech), and printed words and convert them into a string of numbers, otherwise known as a digital signal. Digital signals enable a lot of improvements in communication technology (the compact disc being one common example). But perhaps the most important implication of the digital signal is that different kinds of machines — computers, telephones, and televisions — all now speak the same language.

The machines are able to take our human communication and translate it into machine language that can be reproduced in exactly the same way it was created, then displayed for another person at the other end of the communication chain. These chains of machines and their human users are what we call networks. Because these machines, including telephones and televisions, are using the computer's digital language, we call them all computer networks.

There are many types of computer networks. The network with the greatest number of machines and users connected to it is the Internet. Basically, the Internet uses the personal computer rather than a telephone or television as the means of accessing digitized information. Private individuals, businesses, universities, and government agencies can use their computers to exchange words, pictures, and sounds with any other person connected to the same computer network. It is the Internet that most writers are talking about when they tout the "information superhighway" or the "wired world."

Here's the way the Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV) in Blacksburg, Va., works: Everything you type or scan or say into a computer is translated into a digital signal. The problem occurs when you need to connect your computer to another computer or to a computer network like the Internet. Right now, the easiest way to connect to a network is to have your computer call another computer over the regular telephone lines. The only problem with using the telephone lines is that the residential telephone system in the U.S. is primarily analog.

Analog and digital are separate languages (like Chinese and French). Just as in the United Nations, translators are needed to enable communication between people speaking different languages. The modem is the translator of the information age. If your computer has a modem, it takes the digital signal of your computer and translates it into an analog signal that can be transmitted over the existing telephone line. The modem in your computer then translates the analog signal back to digital, and the two computers are able to talk to each other.

Services that provide access to networks of computers need to be able to translate for a number of people at the same time. After all, what good is a network if only one person at a time can connect? So, the BEV maintained a large number of modems, called a modem pool, so that Blacksburg residents could access the Internet network and obtain information about Blacksburg events at the same time. This modem pool is like the translator pool at the United Nations. When the BEV is called by your computer, what you actually are doing is calling for a translator from the modem pool which will then link your computer to the network.

In 1993, the BEV was the only provider of a modem pool to the residents of Montgomery County. Today, however, there is competition among modem pools in Blacksburg as well as across many parts of the country. Small independent companies provide modem pool services, and even the local and long distance telephone companies are beginning to provide analog/digital translation. Additionally, the telephone companies are currently working on upgrading the telephone network from an analog to a digital network. When you hear about Integrated Services Digital Networks (ISDN) or an Ethernet, they are all talking about efforts by the telephone company to make the telephone network a digital one.

And when the telephone network is digital, we will no longer need modems to connect to other computers. All the machines will have learned the same language. NaT

Scott J. Patterson is an assistant professor of communication studies at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va. He can be reached at Spatters@VT.edu.

Forever No More

They of Appalachia
where I am no more
know no more of me
than I of them
who still may be
where I am no more
without their knowing
without their caring
that I am here
as lost in wonder
as we all are
to one another
in all those places
where we once were.

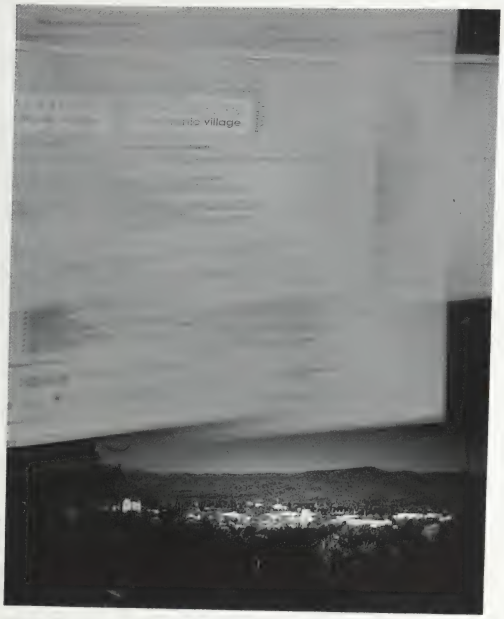
— Glenn McKee

Glenn McKee, a native of Southeast Ohio, lives in Waterville, Maine. Recent and forthcoming publications include Potato Eyes, ONTHEBUS, The Cafe Review, *and the* Puckerbush Review.

The Internet Debate

As technology continues to shoot ahead at the speed of light along the Information Superhighway, will it be an equalizer? Or will society be divided into the technologically literate and illiterate, into the haves and have-nots? Is the Internet — now or ever — going to be a boon to rural areas? Is there anything that can be done to make it more appealing or acceptable to rural areas? Responses to these questions vary.

"I would not use the word 'boon.' And I don't think we need to do anything to make it more appealing or acceptable," says Andrew Cohill, the Bill Gates of the Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV) in Southwest Virginia. "The people I meet from rural areas are already far more sophisticated in their thinking about this than people in urban or suburban areas.



Rick Griffiths

Blacksburg, Va., rests peacefully beneath the electronic village's shadow.

"I think many folks, at least in rural Southwest Virginia where we're working with a lot of communities to help them get started, see it as an equalizer. When people have this ubiquitous connectivity in the region, it opens up opportunities for them in terms of work and socialization and participation in the community that historically have not been available in rural areas."

The BEV director previously worked in the private sector for AT&T and in information systems at Virginia Tech, where he earned his Ph.D. in environmental design and planning.

Asked whether the Internet would increase social stratification, Cohill replies, "That's only going to be a problem if we let it become a problem. The *technology* is not going to stratify us. The way we *deal* with the technology could stratify us."

In dealing with technology, "we need a way in which to make more of an impact in Appalachia," says Anita Puckett, assistant professor in the Appalachian Studies program within the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies at Virginia Tech. A native of Dayton, Ohio, Puckett traces her ancestry to rural Eastern Kentucky. She was an undergraduate at the University of Kentucky in Lexington and a faculty member at Southeast Community College in Harlan.

She learned about the implementation of computer networking while doing fieldwork for her Ph.D. in linguistic anthropology, which she received from the University of Texas at Austin. While working in rural Southeastern Kentucky, Puckett was invited to join in the development of BEV's technology and language and today is a member of the BEV research advisory committee.

"The same old models of economic change are still at work," creating what Puckett calls "missionary movements." Just as religious missionaries imparted their Biblical knowledge and beliefs to ignorant savages, she asserts that proponents of the Internet are dumping the technology on the technologically illiterate and expecting them to use and benefit from it.

"They presume that what is good for business or for school systems is good for a rural community system," she says. In addition to setting up the basic hardware and software, people implementing community-wide Internet systems need to display sensitivity. "We need to customize the system to meet the needs of the community," she insists. "We need to make the database and software more user-friendly and feasible, so people can look for recipes or religious material, for pornographic material or web browser catalogs, for job employment and training."

The situation raises basic cultural and economic issues, Puckett says. Many rural homes have no telephone or electricity and therefore have no access to the Internet. Solving that problem by offering access to Internet in public places, such as libraries, is often done without considering such problems as literacy or transportation. Then there are cultural beliefs or values that can influence use of the Internet. For example, Puckett notes, in many rural communities, using the library is considered a female activity.

The Internet can be a valuable tool for those looking for employment, but Puckett cautions that "we need to create a classification system that will meet the needs of the people who want to research job lists. For instance, how far away is the job? Who owns or manages the company? How much does it pay?

"Rural Appalachians' needs for job information are often different than they are for urban middle-class residents, particularly when it pertains to job skills, transportation, and child care. For example, rural people may not understand the job codes that are used on the Internet or what a term created by a computer programmer implies.

"The population density here is low, and funding is hard to get. Before infrastructure can be considered, where is the money for phone lines, electric lines, equipment, and servers going to come from? The question

by Angela Mallicote Wampler

of equal access is a very real one when you have infrastructure obstacles.

"Costs vary in every community, but it's a basic economic issue. Funding has to be very creative and carefully thought out because of issues of placement. Any given community can probably find monies to install limited access, but at issue is who gets access and where is placement going to be? Traditionally, these monies are funneled into providing access for a very small 'special set' of community residents and not always freely accessible to an entire community or county.

"In Virginia, there is a statewide initiative for funding sources and networking for educational purposes, but it's political. It may meet certain perceived needs, but it may or may not address basic needs. Meanwhile, Kentucky is discussing regional networking.

"Private businesses, especially long-distance carriers, are sometimes willing to donate services or to fund infrastructure through phone lines if there are matching funds or a follow-up at the municipal, state, or federal level to implement the system.

"Censorship is a different issue," Puckett continues. "Locally, nationally, and internationally, what is acceptable or unacceptable on the Internet varies. In rural communities, the need to monitor access can be much more important because of local values and community needs."

Regarding pornographic material, a three-judge panel unanimously struck down the Communications Decency Act in June. According to David S. Broder, national political correspondent for *The Washington Post,* the law would have allowed the prosecution of those who put "indecent" or "patently offensive" material on the Internet, where it might be seen by minors. The judges had no difficulty in finding that the standards were unconstitutionally vague and that it was illogical to criminalize the use of the Internet by someone who had no way of knowing the age of the recipient.

"Comedians now joke about going to the Internet just to have free speech," adds Puckett. "That won't sit well in rural communities. How is it going to be decided? How do we filter the information?"

Then there is a confidentiality problem. "In rural communities, the placement of computer terminals or PCs hooked into an electronic network in public areas where your activity can be accessed by someone else or viewed by others in the community can be intimidating. A person's pride can also be at stake. When you don't know how to use the equipment, you may be reluctant to ask for help in a public setting."

Cohill has already heard many of these arguments. "The difference between my opinion on this and people who get off on 'Isn't this a terrible problem?' is that in Blacksburg, we're trying to solve the problem the best way we know how. Debating the issue for months, or even years, keeps everybody from having access to the Net.

"I would invite them to come to the Blacksburg Public Library and talk to some of the people who use the facilities there. They'll find out those people appreciate having that service in the library. We did that without a long debate about whether it was the right thing to do or not. We just did it, and people have been using it for three years. That's more important than having a three-year debate on whether or not we need to find a way to buy people telephones.

"Everybody in Blacksburg, in fact everybody in Montgomery County, which is in the heart of Appalachia, has a severe problem with the poverty that exists just outside the city limits. Yet everybody in the county who can get to the library has had access to the Internet and access to free e-mail accounts. That's an accomplishment.

"When I talk to communities about serving the information have-nots," Cohill continues, "I always tell them to start with free access in the public library. I think it's unreasonable to expect that anybody's going to come along and say, 'We're going to buy everyone in the community a computer, a modem, and an e-mail account.' There are still people without telephones.

"Is that a bad thing? I think it is. But all the money in the world hasn't solved that problem. We're not going to do that with computers either. We have to look at other ways of making sure the people who need access to the technology can get it.

"Most people who need access to a telephone can get it by going to a neighbor's house, the local library, or public pay phones. I think the way we address the problem of making sure that the rural poor have access to the Internet is to work with local schools and libraries to ensure that anybody who wants an e-mail account can get one, whether or not he or she can afford a computer or a modem or an e-mail account."

Empowered by services such as the BEV, rural users are getting their feet wet "surfing the Net." Area businesses have joined it so consumers can order pizza or read transcripts of city council meetings. "BEV can theoretically handle 'real-time listening,' but we don't have a big enough pipeline to handle audio and text at the same time," says Puckett.

Over 100 civic groups in Blacksburg have home pages and an active presence on-line. "One of the things civic groups are telling us is that when they go on-line and use the Internet as a way to communicate with their members," says Cohill, "interest in their activities and participation in physical meetings goes up.

"I think that's really important to note because people have been predicting that when everybody gets on the Internet, they're all going to stay home and stare at their computers. We haven't seen that in Blacksburg. What we're seeing is that the network is being integrated into daily life as another way to communicate with other people. That's the focus we've taken from the beginning. It's not just a toy."

To hear proponents of the Internet talk, says Puckett, "you'd think it was the best thing since sliced bread. But tossing the technology into the school systems and libraries can result in further disempowerment, disenfranchisement, and further marginalizing of cultural boundaries," she contends. "Mountain people won't use the Internet if they don't perceive a need for it."

And in the end, isn't empowerment what technology is supposed to be all about? N&T

Angela Mallicote Wampler is a free-lance writer in Bluff City, Tenn. She is the writer for The Bristol (Tenn.) Herald Courier's A!Magazine for the Arts, *and a regular contributor to* The Business Journal of Upper East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia *and to National Storytelling Association publications.*

A HandMade Vision

Writing an article about HandMade in America seemed a simple task.

After all, I was one of the 360 participants in HandMade's initial strategic planning process. However, I have discovered how little I know, how easy it is to confuse the issues, and how broad the vision to change Western North Carolina has become.

HandMade in America is a three-year old Asheville, N.C.-based nonprofit organization engaged in an innovative, if difficult to describe, approach to regional planning. It started as everything — and as nothing — tangible. It was, and is, people, ideas, concepts, a vision, committees, and goals to change Western North Carolina's economic future. Just when I think I can describe HandMade in two clear, concise sentences, I find another facet to explore. We all like neatly packaged, crisp definitions, but that just won't work with HandMade.

Let me explain the basic concept.

For years, Western North Carolina has needed economic help, but there were few ideas for creative initiatives coming from state legislators. Instead, there was lots of muttering by local citizens and community leaders that when it came to funding, Raleigh and Charlotte got all the money and Western North Carolina was a poor relation. Local political officials rarely agreed on what to do about Western North Carolina, a state of affairs complicated by the fact that the cast of characters in that arena changed every few years.

Just about everybody gets into the act as Western North Carolina plans its future.

In 1993, Becky Anderson, then economic director of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, went to New York City to promote Western North Carolina to manufacturers interested in building new facilities. While in New York, Anderson met Dan Keith Ray, a consultant to nonprofits at a national firm.

Ray, who originally hails from Western North Carolina's Haywood County, told Anderson that the mountains were not suitable for most manufacturing and she should concentrate on developing the indigenous crafts that had such a vital history in the region. With the support of educational institutions such as Penland School of Crafts, Haywood Community College, and others, Ray felt that the basis for an economic renaissance was already in place in Western North Carolina. They only had to nurture it.

Ray felt that the basis for an economic renaissance was already in place in Western North Carolina. They only had to nurture it.

Anderson returned to Asheville with Ray's vision in her head. Encouraged by community leaders, by Ray's support and willingness to lend a hand, and inspired by Anderson's own enthusiasm, the Asheville Chamber of Commerce applied for a three-year grant from The Pew Partnership for Civic Change, part of The Pew Charitable Trusts, based in Philadelphia. In an effort to solve problems in smaller American cities using a cross-disciplinary approach, The Pew Charitable Trusts supports nonprofit activities in areas such as conservation, culture, education, health, and public policy. It was Anderson who christened the project "HandMade in America." Originally, she thought it would remain under the umbrella of the regionally focused Asheville Chamber of Commerce.

In the grant application to The Pew Partnership, HandMade proposed an inclusive strategic planning process based on Ray's suggestion that Western North Carolina's long history of handcraft production was the place from which to launch future regional community development efforts. Participation in the planning process needed to be as broad as possible, the proposal argued, because the collective thinking of people from the cultural, educational, and business sectors, all working cooperatively, would result in a vision that truly made sense for the region.

Furthermore, HandMade believed that craft artists and their productions repre-

by Kathleen Curtis Wilson

sented a significant but largely undervalued resource to this portion of the state and might have the potential to establish a presence in international markets and cultures. The arguments were persuasive enough to convince Pew to award HandMade $400,000 in December 1993. At this point, HandMade moved to its own offices, and Anderson, a native Western Carolinian and sister of poet and writer Fred Chappell, became the executive director. She brought 20 years' worth of experience interacting with community leaders to the job.

Planning Begins

In 1994, the strategic planning process started — and so did the confusion. Through business community contacts, personal friendships, recommendations from colleagues, and word-of-mouth, HandMade nominated people from every profession and field of interest to participate on the task forces. Ray acted as facilitator.

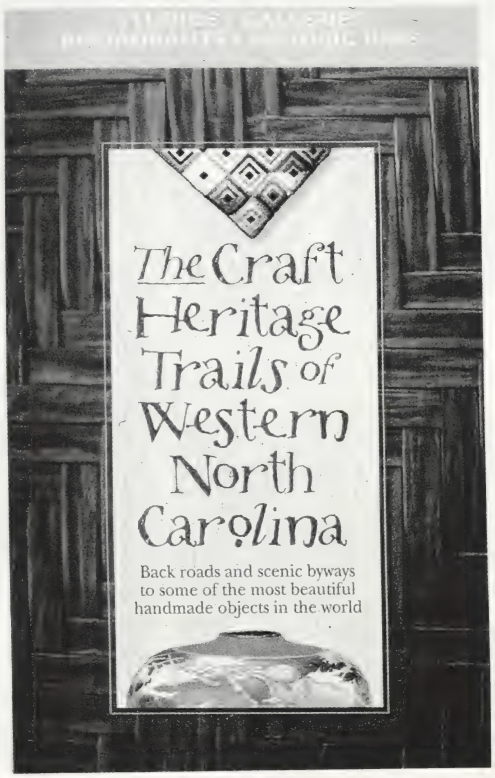
The first four task forces — economic development, tourism, culture, and education — were community-based; they focused on citizens' problems and needs on a grassroots level. Charged with carrying on the work of the first four committees, the next set of four task forces addressed the broader regional issues of revenue generation, communication, constituency development, and marketing.

As people heard about HandMade, they asked to be involved in the process, and they asked what that process was exactly. No individual was excluded, and no definitive answers were given to questions that, as yet, had no answers. Each individual, encouraged to use his or her talents where they were best suited, served on only one task force. I chose the communications task force, one which discussed issues such as changing Appalachia's negative stereotypes and attracting tourists while still maintaining the quality and integrity of the region's towns and attractions.

Midway through the six-month-long planning process, the number of participants had grown to 360. Confusion mounted. At times, HandMade had difficulty communicating with such a large number of people. People were calling daily, some with questions, others with misconceptions. While there were callers who simply wanted to know if HandMade was hiring staff, others were anxious to find a way to contribute to the effort as volunteers. Each group, but particularly the crafts people, wondered how HandMade would impinge on their "turf" and just how the $400,000 would be spent.

Ponytails and Wing Tips

Despite the logistical nightmare of holding task force meetings across a 8,643 square mile area, people came together for the first time from very diverse backgrounds to define regional and community problems and to find new solutions that would alter Western North Carolina's future course. Conveners kept


The Craft Heritage Trails of Western North Carolina
Back roads and scenic byways to some of the most beautiful handmade objects in the world

Over 400 people worked on the National Craft Heritage Corridor project, successfully partnering the region's crafts community and its tourism industry.

the focus on the issues assigned to each task force, but at the same time, they did not avoid dealing with any subject that came up.

As a result, people who had never met in the course of daily life and work greeted each other at a conference table and found they had much in common. Hair styles varied from gray ponytails (on both sexes) to the short, fashionable cuts and wing tip shoes worn by "the establishment." At my first all-day task force meeting, I sat at a table with, among others, a weaving teacher, a children's author, the director of a major corporation, a potter, and a retired state extension agent. I was most impressed with the participants' universal desire to get involved with a process that might change their lives. I must admit that I also think that some of those present were sure that the whole endeavor would fail but were curious nonetheless to know exactly what HandMade was.

In spite of the passion that old and young, crafter and banker each felt about particular issues, everyone was given his or her turn to speak. Don't think for a minute that there was perfect harmony. Heated discussions allowed committee members to express deeply felt concerns. I personally credit Ray for being able to keep ideas flowing without getting hung up on snags that could have easily hampered the overall process.

While the task forces were meeting in different locations across the region, HandMade commissioned Appalachian State University (ASU) researchers in nearby Boone, N.C., to survey the craft industry and determine its contribution to Western North Carolina's economy. Conducted by Dinesh Dave and Michael Evans of ASU's Business College, the survey documented a handcraft industry that employs 739 full-time and 3,369 part-time workers and contributes $122 million annually to the region. The professors cautioned that the actual economic contribution could very well exceed their estimations.

After 24 meetings, during which priorities for each task force were hammered out, the task forces then nominated two individuals to a strategic planning committee. These delegates were charged with representing the task force's concerns and suggestions. The strategic planning committee, in turn, elected 22 of its members to be the organization's first board of directors.

The Buddy System

The end result of all this collaboration is a set of 20-year goals aimed at creating regional growth centered around the handmade industry. The goals focus on

finding sustainable economic development opportunities that maintain rural quality of life; on providing business and financial support for craftspeople; and, finally, on reinforcing a positive image of the region's craft culture through public relations and education.

HandMade is now charged with the job of helping to prioritize those goals and to implement projects being carried out in partnership with other organizations and institutions. All projects are community-based. The size or configuration of a "community" can vary from a project in one small rural town to insurance concerns raised by craftspeople working in the handcraft industry. Each "community" must define its own needs and resources and determine how it sees itself fitting into the strategic plan. And fitting into the overall strategic plan is essential. Many projects proposed to HandMade, in fact, don't qualify because they don't address any of the stated goals.

At a time when arts funding is extremely limited, HandMade has steered away from National Endowment type funding and has instead sought other sources such as educational and tourism grants and economic development financing. The HandMade staff — which consists of Anderson, assistant director Sassi McClellan, and volunteer office help — coordinates various aspects of each project, from grant writing to public relations to managing a project in its initial stages by keeping all the partners connected and on track.

Partnerships at Work

How the partnership concept works in practice is that a group with an idea must find another organization with which to work. HandMade's role is to act as a catalyst in any number of ways: by matching ideas to people, pairing people with organizations, suggesting funding sources to project partners, and helping with grant writing. But HandMade does not directly manage or solely fund a project. Once all the pieces are in place, the widely diverse projects (see sidebar on p. 23) are run by volunteers from the original task forces and from partnership organizations.

A good example of how the process works is a program in progress in the North Carolina towns of Andrews, Bakersville, Chimney Rock, and Mars Hill. Known commonly as the "Four Small Towns," the project aims to base the revitalization of these communities on their long-standing cultural heritage. The partners involved in this effort are the Western regional office of the North Carolina Division of Community Assistance, the North Carolina Main Street Program, and the North Carolina Land Conservation Trust Resourceful Communities Program. In addition, Four Small Towns has received funding from the Greensboro, N.C.-based Kathleen Price and Joseph M. Bryan Family Fund.

Each of the towns involved has a local 12-15 member steering committee working on organization, image, economic restructuring, and marketing. In addition, each town is paired with a Western North Carolina "sister community" that already has an economically viable Main Street and can serve as a mentor. Directors of the Brevard, Marion, Waynesville, Hendersonville, Shelby, and Morganton Main Street Programs and others will form "resource teams" to assess the four towns' assets.

Then, those teams will work with local citizens to prepare a downtown revitalization plan that best fits each individual community. This has brought together over 60 people who will lead their communities through the planning and implementation process. A total of more than 500 people have participated in public meetings in the four target towns during the planning process. All four towns are responsible for securing grant match funds in the second year of the project. If one town fails to meet its portion of the match, all the towns will lose

Jay Fields

Sconces by Karen Barnes

Steven Forbes-deSoule

Raku-fired globe by Steven Forbes-deSoule

Mark Wilson

Traditional herringbone weave footstool seat by Bennie Martin

Mark Wilson

"Tractor Seat" by William Edwards

The incredible breadth of indigenous handmade crafts has become the basis for an economic renaissance in Western North Carolina.

Selected HandMade Projects

The National Craft Heritage Corridor
Partners: Blue Ridge Host, High Country Host, Smoky Mountain Host
Goal: To define, develop, and market a national craft heritage corridor by means of a printed guidebook.

The Investment Bank
Partner: The Self-Help Union
Goal: To help craftpersons secure business loans, often a difficult feat since home-based craft businesses rarely fit the profile required by most banks when screening loan applications.

The Craft Production Job Training Program
Partners: Mayland Community College, Penland School of Craft
Goal: To establish a craft production training program that results in unique job opportunities for members of the local community.

The Center of Craft, Creativity, and Design
Partners: The University of North Carolina at Asheville, Appalachian State University, Western Carolina University, the North Carolina General Assembly, the Windgate Foundation.
Goal: To establish a higher academic base for craft, the center will invite fellows in wood, clay, fiber, and metal to teach for a year in the community; will form partnerships with schools of design across the county; study issues of craft and creativity; and develop public school arts-based curricula. The center also will house the archives of the Southern Highland Craft Guild.

Regional Craft Registry
Partner: Haywood Community College, TVA, North Carolina Rural Center
Goal: To develop an inclusive listing of regional craft artists, part-time home-based artists as well as professionals. The registry will be available as a printed document, as a local resource, and on CD-ROM — complete with pictures and descriptions — for use as a national marketing tool.

Art in the A+ Schools
Partners: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Waynesville Central Elementary School
Goal: To develop an integrated, interdisciplinary crafts curriculum for grades K-5 in the four A+ (arts-based curriculum) schools in the region.

By Our Hands
Partners: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, Arts Councils in each county
Goals: To develop a traveling documentary photography exhibit of contemporary craftspeople at work. The photography will be accompanied by work by local crafts artists in each county and will be exhibited in public places. After making the local rounds, the exhibit will travel across the state.

their second year's funding, thus encouraging the communities to assist each other.

HandMade's most significant accomplishment for 1996 is the establishment of the National Craft Heritage Corridor. The Corridor is comprised of seven loop trails, each connected to the Blue Ridge Parkway. Altogether, these trails offer 351 sites, including studios, galleries, historic inns, local restaurants, and historic craft sites. Hot off the press, the Corridor's impressive 120-page guidebook, entitled *The Craft Heritage Trails of Western North Carolina,* offers site listings, route maps, photographs, and brief features ranging from describing a pottery's past history as a distillery to a thumbnail sketch of the work of physician Mary Martin Sloop in Crossnore, N.C. More than 400 people worked on the Corridor, including committees from all 21 counties, a public relations committee, and the three tourism organizations who partnered the venture with HandMade: Blue Ridge Host, High Country Host, and Smoky Mountain Host. The Corridor brings together the crafts community and the region's tourism industry in a cooperative venture, resulting in a new product for selling tourism to visitors and promoting the state's natural resources.

Taming the Octopus

The incredible variety of projects being undertaken has led to misunderstandings and miscommunications. There is still no clear-cut definition in the minds of many people as to what HandMade is — and what it is not. Anderson says, "I now have to ask the audience I am addressing if they want me to speak about HandMade's economic, cultural, tourism, or educational projects. To communicate with 1,000 people currently working on projects in so many communities and institutions across the region, all with their own interests, is difficult at best." The latest newsletter, published quarterly, was mailed to 2,800 — and the number is still growing.

I have begun to think of HandMade as an octopus. Each tentacle is reaching for its own piece of food which, in turn, feeds the whole. But one arm rarely knows what any other arm is doing at any given time. For example, as an Appalachian textile historian, I am personally in-

terested in the Center for Craft, Creativity and Design, a project still being planned by around 30 citizens who hope to build a unique facility in Haywood County, and I try to stay current with that project's progress. I read the newsletter to stay aware, at least vaguely, of projects such as the A+School and the Investment Bank, but I know little of the day-to-day progress of many projects in the works.

No organization is without its problems — and HandMade is no exception. While HandMade has been successful at securing funds for specific projects, it has received only minimal funds for overhead expenses. What HandMade is experiencing is a common problem in many organizations: Money can be raised for a visual or educational project, but money to pay the support personnel is often hard to come by. Existing arts and cultural funders are usually reluctant to dip into their limited resources to supply organizations with operating support instead of financing projects which result in actual artists receiving compensation.

With the help of volunteers, Anderson and McClellan are running full speed ahead, but soon the office staff will have to grow to avoid the pitfalls that occur when too few try to accomplish too much. Fortunately, Anderson has the energy level and drive to match the growing demands of implementing the vision of the strategic planning process. In time, though, the job will grow beyond even her capabilities.

Another problem is communications. As a member, I have been disappointed by the communications committee. The leadership needs to be realigned, and specific programs must be enacted to generate the involvement and enthusiasm that is such an integral part of the success of other committees.

Communicating effectively to the hugely diverse group of participants involved in HandMade and to the region as a whole is probably the most important job ahead. The lack of good communications can do terrific damage to an organization in its formative stage.

Still, with the publication of *The Craft Heritage Trails,* HandMade has taken its first step in turning what was a vision-in-the-making into reality. HandMade's vision — that of making Western North Carolina the center of handmade objects for the whole nation — now seems possible and exciting to many. But don't be fooled into thinking the guidebook for the National Crafts Heritage Corridor *is* HandMade. It is just one arm of the ever growing octopus.

HandMade's vision — that of making Western North Carolina the center of handmade objects for the whole nation — now seems possible and exciting.

Projects supported by HandMade are boiling to the surface all over Western North Carolina — each with its own vision, volunteers, partners, and funding, so that HandMade will probably never be definable in one or two sentences. Its strength lies in the vision of many, all of whom possess a desire to use new concepts and tools to solve old problems. N&T

Kathleen Curtis Wilson is a textile historian, writer, and consultant who lives in Asheville, N.C. She is also a research associate for the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at East Tennessee State University.

The Garden

- for Nan

Inside these walls
there is something growing like a fireleaf
coming up from the naked body of a woman's stem.
I have come here to learn of the fire
and of the stem, and to know the heat
from her body when she does the Dance of Love.
Here, bordered by the silence in rock,
there is more food than one man can
ever eat. Leafy greens. Tubers and roots.
Flower petals. And hard-shelled grain —
bounty for every man in love.
Sometimes after weeding the radish row I
wander over into the corn.
I have seen her there, peeping through the stalks,
out of the corner of my eye. Yet
she is never there.
Someday I will pull those old cornstalks
out from their finger-like grip on the earth
and with nowhere to hide she will be
caught there naked. Where I can watch
as she makes love to the absence of night as the sun goes down
and she dusts off the moon with
her hair.

— Thomas Rain Crowe

Poet and author Thomas Rain Crowe's work has appeared and been performed in collaboration with musicians, dancers, actors, and visual artists in the Asheville community over the past 15 years. A founding editor of Katuah Journal: A Bioregional Journal for the Southern Appalachians, *he is currently a contributing editor of the* Asheville Poetry Review, *publisher of New Native Press, and founder/producer of Fern Hill Records.*

ETSU

News CASS

Newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services • East Tennessee State University

Summer/Fall1996

Archives & Special Collections
A Division of Sherrod Library

CARROLL REECE MUSEUM

INSIDE:

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New Appalachian Course Set, p. 7

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF APPALACHIA ADVISORY BOARD ANNOUNCED

The Center for Appalachian Studies and Services is proud to announce the advisory board for the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia* project. Advisory board members will assist the center with planning and development of the planned reference work. Each board member represents ties to one or more of the 13 Appalachian states identified by the Appalachian Regional Commission (from northeast Mississippi to southern New York). We are excited by the wealth of expertise and experience this distinguished advisory board brings to the encyclopedia project. The advisory board members are:

Noah Adams, National Public Radio, originally from Kentucky.
Marilou Awiakta, award-winning Cherokee/Appalachian writer from East Tennessee.
Howard H. Baker, Jr., former United States senator from Tennessee (1967-1985).
Rick Boucher, congressman from Southwest Virginia.
Wilma Dykeman, award-winning novelist, historian, and essayist from East Tennessee and North Carolina.
Henry Louis Gates, Jr., W. E. B. DuBois Professor of Humanities at Harvard University, chair of the Department of Afro-American Studies, director of the W. E. B. DuBois Institute, president of the Afro-American Academy, and

continued on page 2

ARCHIVES' NEW LIBRARY HOME RECEIVES FUNDING

With the recent approval by the Tennessee General Assembly of **$27.3 million** for construction of a new library building at East Tennessee State University, a new home for Archives and Special Collections, which includes the Archives of Appalachia, is much nearer to becoming reality.

The department will be housed on the top floor of the four-story building (see illustration). This new home will provide much-needed space for collection growth, as well as better environmental control of collections. An attractive reading room will also provide patrons a pleasing place for research. The archives will be located adjacent to a replica of the congressional office of Jimmy Quillen, retiring Tennessee first congressional district representative, and to the library administrative offices.

Following the opening of construction bids this summer, plans call for construction to take about 18 months. Opening of the new facility is expected at the beginning of the **fall 1998** semester, or spring semester 1999 if there are delays.

Photo by Jim Sledge, University Relations

Model of ETSU's New University Library

The library will be located on the southern edge of the ETSU campus at the corner of Lake Street and Boundary Road, the

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Advisory Board, continued from page 1

award-winning author from West Virginia.

John Hall, chief executive officer for Ashland, Inc., in Kentucky.

Nancy Hollister, lieutenant governor of Ohio.

Amory (Amo) Houghton, Jr., congressman and former executive officer for Corning, Inc., from New York.

Juanita Morris Kreps, former U. S. secretary of commerce (1977-1979) and member of the Duke University faculty from Kentucky, now living in North Carolina.

Bill Kovach, curator of the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University and former editor of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, originally from Tennessee.

Alice Manicur, vice president for student and educational services, Frostburg State University in Maryland, originally from West Virginia.

David McCullough, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Truman* (1993), senior contributing editor of *American Heritage* magazine, and free-lance writer, originally from Pennsylvania.

Zell Bryan Miller, governor (1990-) and former lieutenant governor of Georgia (1975-1990).

James Henry (Jimmy) Quillen, retiring congressman (1963-97) and former newspaper publisher from Tennessee.

Jean Ritchie, singer, songwriter, and folklorist from Viper County, Ky.

Albert (Al) P. Smith, Jr., Kentucky newspaper publisher, communications company executive, and former member of the Appalachian Regional Commission (1979-1982).

Lee Smith, member of the English department faculty at North Carolina State University at Raleigh and award-winning author from Virginia.

Ross Spears, III, award-winning documentary filmmaker from Tennessee.

Jane B. Stephenson, director of the new Opportunity School for Women at Berea College, Berea, Ky.

Karen Wade, superintendent of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Jesse L. White, federal co-chair, Appalachian Regional Commission, and former consultant, lecturer, and writer in the fields of economic development, public policy, and strategic planning, originally from Mississippi.

If you would like more information about the ***Encyclopedia of Appalachia***, slated for publication in about five years, please contact the center at (423) 439-5348. ◆

NewsCASS, the joint newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, Archives and Special Collections, and the Reece Museum, East Tennessee State University, is published three times a year. Center and Reece Museum members receive *NewsCASS* as part of the benefits of membership.

CENTER STAFF

Shari Brown, Grants Coordinator
Nancy Fischman, Managing Editor, *Now & Then*
Stevan Jackson, Director, Appalachian-Scottish Studies
Penelope Lane, Technical Clerk
Charles Moore, Coordinator
Dr. Jean Haskell Speer, Director
Tim Stafford, Research Associate
Jack Tottle, Director, Bluegrass and Country Music
Jane Harris Woodside, Asst. Director & Editor, *Now & Then*

ARCHIVES STAFF

Georgia Greer, Secretary
Ned Irwin, Public Services Archivist
Norma Myers, Director
Ed Speer, Library Assistant
Marie Tedesco, Technical Services Archivist

MUSEUM STAFF

Margaret S. Carr, Asst. Director/Registrar
Nancy Jane Earnest, Slide Curator
Lisa Erwin, Secretary
Harold F. Stewart, Sr., Installation Supervisor
Blair H. White, Asst. Director/Curator

CENTER MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

In developing a listing of center memberships for the first time, a few persons were inadvertently left out of the last newsletter. The center wishes to express its sincere regret for this error. To the following members left out, we apologize and say thank you for your continued support:

Mr. and Mrs. Abe Hart, Jr., Watauga.

CENTER ANNOUNCES PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

Now & Then and the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services announce the 1997 **A Fresh Look at Appalachia Photography Contest**. The contest will accept photographs -- both black-and-white and color -- which give a contemporary, nonstereotypical look at life in the Appalachian region. We are using a very inclusive definition of the region, stretching along the mountain chain from southern New York to northern Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia.

Each winner will receive a cash prize and publication in the summer 1997 **Appalachian Photography** issue of *Now & Then*. All entries must be postmarked by **March 15, 1997**. For contest rules, write Photography Contest, CASS/ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City, TN 37614-0556 or call (423) 439-5348. ◆

CENTER STAGE:

AMANDA MATHIS

The center staff is frequently amazed by all that our student aides do. Both inside and outside the office, 21-year-old Amanda Mathis has been no exception.

This past spring, the **Kingston, Tenn.,** native concluded a two-and-a-half year stint working approximately six hours a week at the center. For all but the first semester, she was on an Academic Performance Scholarship, a form of financial aid based on the student's academic record. Mathis is majoring in marketing because, she reasons, "It's a broad enough field that I'll be able to get any kind of job." But the type of job she really wants is to work as a professional musician.

She has been a star student in the East Tennessee State University **Bluegrass and Country Music program**.

Photo courtesy of Jack Tottle

Amanda Mathis

"Amanda is one of those students who showed up in the program knowing more about the fiddle than anyone her age had a right to," says Jack Tottle, program director.

While in the Bluegrass and Country Music program, Mathis added the mandolin and guitar to her skills and began writing her own tunes when Tottle suggested that she try her hand at composition. When she returned with her first effort, it was "Yonoko's Waltz." Named after the wife of the man who had made her fiddle, the piece had a fully developed, very beautiful melody and highly unusual chord progressions. "It certainly didn't sound like someone's first attempt," remembers Tottle.

Mathis has served as a student director for several semesters, heading up one of five student bands, and has played in the senior ETSU Bluegrass Band. As a member of that band, she had an opportunity to share the stage with the "Father of Bluegrass Music," Bill Monroe, at a concert sponsored by the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance at the Paramount Theatre in Bristol last September.

This past year, in addition to working at the center, handling her bluegrass band duties, and going to school full-time, Mathis played fiddle for an all-girl bluegrass band, the **Wildwood Girls**, which last summer went on a United Service Organizations (USO) tour to Sicily and the Azores. During the school year, having driven back from an engagement in Florida or Michigan, Mathis would occasionally report to work looking only slightly "worse for the wear."

She began playing when she was 10 years old. After taking lessons in Kingston and Knoxville, she began playing professionally -- locally at first, then later at **Dollywood** in Pigeon Forge, and with several traveling bluegrass bands, including the Wildwood Girls and another all-girl band, **Petticoat Junction**.

This past spring, a fellow musician, who had gotten to know Mathis's work when she played at Dollywood, called and offered her a job playing for a Gatlinburg music-and-comedy revue at Elwood Smooch's Hillbilly Hoedown. She has decided to finish her degree part-time while holding down jobs both at the Hoedown and at the new Holiday Inn Express. "There aren't too many jobs in music that are

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CENTER CUTS

◆ Best wishes and thanks go to **Frieda Souder**, center secretary, for the past four years of conscientious and effective service. Souder resigned June 14, 1996.

◆ **Dr. Marie Tedesco**, Archives and Special Collections' technical services archivist, is on a one-year non-instructional leave to complete work on a book about the Elizabethton, Tenn. rayon plants.

STAFFORD COMPLETES MOUNTAIN CULTURE STUDY

Tim Stafford recently completed research on mountains and mountain cultures worldwide for a project developed by the center and the **Great Smoky Mountains National Park** (GSMNP). A historian by training, Stafford is a musician currently playing with the bluegrass band Blue Highway, and he teaches part-time for East Tennessee State University's music department.

The report, entitled "Mountains, Mountain People, and Higher-Altitude Protected Areas Worldwide: A Preliminary Review and Bibliography," was completed last April. It includes an overview of general physical knowledge about mountains, mountain biodiversity, similarities of mountain people worldwide and the problems facing them, and the activities of proactive mountain organizations such as Gatlinburg-based Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere, The Mountain Institute of Franklin, W.Va., and Alp Action, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Mountains are among the most diverse and fragile of all ecosystems. In 1994, one-tenth of the world's population lived in mountainous regions; two billion more lived downstream from those mountainous areas and were vitally dependent upon the sustainable development/preservation of such regions. These sustainable development/preservation strategies must incorporate the age-old wisdom of indigenous cultures and be wary of the impact of development. Examples of successful sustainable development strategies are detailed in the study. ◆

Center Staffers Appointed To Tennessee-Israel Committee

Gov. Don Sundquist has appointed **Dr. Jean Speer**, center director, and **Blair White**, asst. director/curator for the Reece Museum, to the Tennessee-Israel Cooperation Committee. The committee was formed to enhance the technological, research and development infrastructure of Tennessee and Israel; to increase cultural interchange; and promote shared values. Speer and White are serving on the tourism subcommittee. Pictured here are Speer (third from right, first row) and White (third from right, second row) at ceremonies in the Old Supreme Court Chambers of the State Capitol in Nashville, along with Gov. Sundquist and Consul General of Israel Arye Mekel (sixth and fifth from right, first row).

ARCHIVES

SELECTED RECENT ACQUISITIONS:

GORDON ARONHIME COLLECTION
.5 linear ft.
Consists of clippings of articles by Aronhime on the history of Southwest Virginia and East Tennessee during the late 18th century; correspondence; printed abstracts of Sullivan County, Tenn. records; and a brief history of the Holston-Clinch Rivers region prior to 1800. Donated by Hal Smith, Johnson City.

ROY W. CARDEN COLLECTION
c. 1800-1968. 2 folders.
Consists of copies of wills, deeds, military records, and other genealogical materials related to the Carden family of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, as well as copies of documents and photographs relating to World War II. Donated by Roy W. Carden, Poulan, Ga.

KENNY FANNON PHOTOGRAPHS
c. 1920-40. 29 prints.
Consists of black and white contact prints of persons and landscapes in Southwest Virginia. Donated by Kenny Fannon, Duffield, Va.

JANE GOTTSCHALL PHOTOGRAPHS
1899. 7 prints.
Consists of seven photographic prints dated July 1899 of the Cold Springs resort and includes some Gottschall family members in scenes. Donated by Jane Gottschall, Johnson City.

GRAY FAMILY PAPERS
1894-1920. .5 linear ft.
Consists of a recipe ledger, cancelled checks, tintypes, deeds, and miscellaneous papers related to the J. S. Gray family of Washington County. Donated by Mike Grover, Johnson City.

HASSINGER LUMBER COMPANY TAPE
1 videotape.
Consists of a VHS videotape on the history of the Hassinger Lumber Company of Bristol, Va. Donated by Martina A. Hassinger, Bristol, Va.

PAUL A. MASTERS COLLECTION
18 audio cassettes.
Consists of audio recordings of old-time music sessions by Washington County musicians Paul Masters, Ulysses Simpson Keebler, Bus Cloyd, Carroll Slemons, Kenneth "Wild Bill" Adams, and Loyd Payne. Recorded and donated by Paul A. Masters, Jonesborough.

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Archives and Special Collections

Members are invited to make donations of materials having historical and cultural significance for Southern Appalachia and its people, as well as financial contributions to the Archives of Appalachia Fund and to the Tom Daniels Memorial Fund (for archives media projects). For further information, phone (423) 439-4338 or write Archives and Special Collections at the address below.

❑ **Archives of Appalachia Fund Amount___**

❑ **Tom Daniels Memorial Fund Amount___**

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Please make checks payable to the specific fund named and mail to Archives and Special Collections, ETSU, Box 70665, Johnson City, TN 37614-0665.

SCIENCE FAIR PRIZES AWARDED

The center continued its support of the Upper East Tennessee Science Fair by awarding two $100 prizes and student memberships in the center for the most outstanding projects related to the Appalachian region. More than 50 projects were considered by Dr. Creg Bishop of East Tennessee State University's Department of Environmental Health, who once again judged the projects for the center.

The winning projects were **Julie Upshaw's** "Miracle of Creation: Butterflies" and **D. J. Earhart's** "Filters -- The Natural Way." Upshaw is an eighth grader from Jonesborough, while fourth grader Earhart is from Kingsport. In Upshaw's "thank you" letter to the center, she indicated that she now wants to study "which wildflowers are unique to the Appalachian region and which butterflies are attracted to them," and added that she couldn't wait to read the center's magazine, *Now & Then*. Congratulations to Julie and D.J. for their good work and interest in the Appalachian region. ◆

Acquisitions, continued from page 4

MOUNTAIN MUSIC VIDEOTAPES
2 videotapes.
Consists of two videotapes: Dwight Diller with Jimmy Triplett, "The Old Drake: Traditional Music from the Mountains of East Central West Virginia, Played on Banjo and Fiddle," and Sheila Kay Adams, "Live-In Concert." Donated by Don Patterson, Camp Springs, Md.

NORTH AMERICAN RAYON/AMERICAN BEMBERG COLLECTION
1990-91. 2.5 linear ft.
Consists of 78 audio cassettes and edited transcripts of interviews conducted by Dr. Marie Tedesco with workers at North American Rayon and American Bemberg companies in Elizabethton. Donated by Dr. Marie Tedesco, Archives and Special Collections, ETSU.

S. T. O'DELL COMPANY LEDGER
1917-19. 1 ledger.
Consists of a business ledger kept by the S. T. O'Dell Company, a Johnson City wagon business, 1917-19. Donated by Lucy Gump, Johnson City.

JACK E. SNIDER PAPERS
14 linear ft.
Consists of materials documenting the life of this East Tennessee educator and civic leader, including correspondence, clippings, church bulletins, and certificates of achievement. Subjects examined include the Appalachian Preaching Mission, Bristol Boys Club, United Fund of Bristol, Bristol Chamber of Commerce, King College, and the national Ruritan Club. Some materials document the activities of Snider's wife, Evelyn, 1961-91. Donated by Dr. Jack E. Snider, Bristol.

REECE MUSEUM

GENEROUS GIVING NURTURES GROWTH OF COLLECTIONS

The Reece Museum's collections continue to grow with the generous gifts of area patrons during the past year. Gifts included:

Georgia Blanchard contributed additional art-related periodicals to an existing collection; an early painting by regional artist, Charles Lawson; and photographs for the print shop exhibit in the Frontier Gallery.

James Garland's gift of a painting of himself and his father, **T. N. Garland**, holds a special place with museum staff. Audiences will remember that T. N., who passed away in March 1995, was a perennial favorite for "Lunch Break at the Reece."

Enhancing the historical collection was the donation of a mourning ring from **Mrs. Margaret Gough** of Johnson City, along with additional items from former city resident **Herstyne Watson**, a cord bed from **Mrs. Evelyn Bowman** of Bowmantown, and a pump organ from **Mrs. Helen Overbay** of Kingsport. The ETSU memorabilia collection received two rat hats from **Mrs. Ruth Combs**, Kingsport, and the transfer of silver serving pieces from the D. P. Culp University Center. **Dr. and Mrs. Charles Wofford** contributed a collection of Limoges china to the decorative arts collection, as well as several textile items and an antique Kodak camera. **Dr. Jack E. Snider** donated railroad and World War II items. The Snider gift helps build collections identified by the museum as areas in which to concentrate.

The art collections made great strides with two additional gifts of John E. Schrader's works donated by his children, **Kevin Schrader** and **Karla Kaneb** and from **Ms. Carole Williams**. The museum now has examples of Schrader's sculpture, photography, drawing, and painting. Exhibiting alumna **Eva Carter** graciously donated one of her abstract paintings from the 1995 alumni exhibition, while the Friends of the Reece Museum (FORM) continued their support through the purchase of a painting by **Steven Wyandt** from the 1995 First Tennessee Bank Show.

Since its inception, the museum's collections have been built through such generous donations from the

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TENNESSEE HUNGER COALITION
1984-95. 1.5 linear ft.
Consists of records of this Kingsport-based coalition and includes office files, newsletters, and materials related to the Commission on Religion in Appalachia, community projects, and conference on hunger and related topics. Donated by Jon Hall, Kingsport, on behalf of the coalition.

OTHER DONATIONS
The archives wishes to thank the following for contributions to the department recently: John Goodin, Lucy Gump, and Hal Smith. ◆

At right, the 53-foot Mountain View School mural painted in acrylic by the Reece Museum's **Nancy Jane Earnest**. The mural depicts the changing seasons, flanked by panels of school activities.

REECE HOSTS STATE MUSEUM CONFERENCE

Delegates from across the state of Tennessee arrived in Johnson City on March 13 to begin a three-day conference of the **Tennessee Association of Museums** (TAM). TAM meets annually in different locations across the state, but had not visited Johnson City since 1988. Hosted by museums within the Northeast Tennessee region, the 1996 TAM conference theme was Disaster/Hazard Preparedness and titled, "This Can't Happen to Us!"

The conference began with a kickoff workshop presented by **Ken Walls**, training coordinator for the United States Tobacco Manufacturing Co., Nashville, who led participants through his course on leadership and management. The conference was also fortunate to have **Dr. Michael Trinkley** deliver the keynote address. Trinkley is director of the Chicora Foundation in Columbia, S. C., which provides services and develops training workshops for the museum community. His address was thoughtful, entertaining, and terrifying, for he forced his audience to consider the real hazards, both major and minor, that their institutions face daily.

"Museums are increasingly called upon to do more with less," Trinkley said. "In such times museums, especially the smaller organizations, may feel the need to withdraw from their commitment to preservation. Far too often, I'm afraid, preservation is seen as a peripheral issue. It gets lost among the multitude of other issues -- fund raising, personnel law, education, access -- facing museums today. The strength of the museum community must come from within and, often, this means developing consortial arrangements. Institutions, by pulling together, can fulfill their missions and ensure that collections -- which they hold in trust for the public -- are protected."

Delegates attended sessions concerning pest management, fire safety, staffing, public relations, fund raising, and collections care. Speakers included **Richard King**, vice-president, Biltmore House, Asheville, N. C.; Johnson City Fire Marshal **Mike Hughes**; **Ann Davis**, director, McMinn County Living Heritage Museum, Athens; **David Estabrook**, director, Chattanooga Regional History Museum; **Rodney Irvin**, Eastman Chemical Co., Kingsport; **Dan Pomeroy**, Tennessee State Museum, Nashville, Tenn.; **Jeanne Finan**, independent museum consultant, Memphis; **Bob Patterson**, director, Clarksville-Montgomery County History Museum; **Bob Sullivan**, director, Cumberland Science Museum, Nashville; **Shelley Reisman Paine**, an objects conservator, Nashville; **Cynthia Stow**, a painting conservator, Nashville; and **Pamela Meister**, executive director of the Southeastern Museums Conference headquartered in Baton Rouge, La.

In addition to early morning affinity breakfasts and sessions throughout the day, delegates also visited area museums and historic sites each evening. Wednesday's

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Friends of the Reece Museum (FORM)

supports the mission of the Carroll Reece Museum through monetary contributions as well as through the volunteer services of its members. FORM funds acquisitions for museum collections, improvements to facilities, public receptions and lectures, and art scholarships. FORM volunteers assist in museum education programs.

FORM members receive Museum and CASS publications, a membership card, discounts on FORM-sponsored events, and preferred seating at FORM-sponsored lectures and public forums.

❑ FORM Student	$5	
❑ FORM Individual	$15	
❑ FORM Family	$25	
❑ FORM Supporting	$50	
❑ FORM Patron	$100	
❑ FORM Sustaining	$250	
❑ FORM Benefactor	$500	or more

(including private benefactors, business, and industrial patrons)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Please make checks payable to FORM and mail to Reece Museum, ETSU, Box 70660, Johnson City, TN 37614-0660.

APPALACHIAN COMMUNITIES FOCUS OF NEW ETSU COURSE

A course focusing on Appalachian communities will be offered at East Tennessee State University for the first time during the fall semester of 1996. The **"Appalachian Communities"** course will be taught by **Dr. Jean Speer**, center director and professor of sociology and anthropology.

The class will engage students in study and discussion of the concept of community and of the various types of communities in Appalachia, as well as the exploration of community issues and ways of providing community service. Students will assist with community projects as part of their coursework.

For more information, please contact the center at (423) 439-5348. ◆

TAM Conference, continued from page 6

Progressive Welcome Reception began with appetizers at the Andrew Johnson National Historic Site. Tusculum's museum studies program director, **Alvin Gerhardt**, entertained and informed delegates during their bus ride as the evening progressed to the Tusculum College campus for refreshments and tours; dessert and coffee were hosted by Tusculum's president and his wife, **Dr. and Mrs. Robert E. Knott** at their home. **Linda Poland** told stories of old Jonesborough during a storytelling bus ride, and refreshments at the Jonesborough History Museum completed the evening.

Thursday evening's Northeast Tennessee Sampler began at Tipton-Haynes Historic Site, where delegates enjoyed appetizers, a tour of the site, and entertainment by **Stevan Jackson**. The second stop was the Reece Museum for dinner and hammered dulcimer music by **Jim and Cheri Miller**. **David Logan**, chair, Department of Art and Design, ETSU, provided an informal discussion concerning his department's experiences following the untimely death of former chair, Jack Schrader. The evening concluded with a beautiful candlelight tour of Rocky Mount Museum.

The conference received support from both the ETSU community and the greater region. We were pleased to have **Dr. Bert C. Bach**, ETSU vice president for academic affairs, welcome delegates to Johnson City, and **Dr. Don Johnson**, interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, provide the introduction for Logan's address. **ETSU President Dr. and Mrs. Roy Nicks** graciously opened their home, Shelbridge, to a pre-conference tour group. FORM members and center staff served as volunteers, keeping the museum office operational and assisting with the dinner event. FORM also funded Jim and Cheri Miller's performance. ETSU alumnus and Reece Museum friend, **Kimball Sterling** served as the auctioneer for TAM's first auction, and the National Storytelling Association provided two passes to the 1996 National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough as door prizes.

The entire museum staff was involved with planning and presenting the conference, with **Margaret Carr** serving as chair for the 1996 conference. The planning committee included representatives from institutions across the Northeast Tennessee area: Cindy Lucas of the President Andrew Johnson Museum and Library at Tusculum College, Pam Sweebe of the Jonesborough-Washington County History Museum in Jonesborough, Penny McLaughlin from Tipton-Haynes Historic Site in Johnson City, Martha Whaley with the James H. Quillen College of Medicine Museum at Mountain Home, Norman Burns of Rocky Mount Museum in Piney Flats, and Duffie Jones of the Hands On! Regional Museum in Johnson City.

TAM annually awards four scholarships in the form of full conference registration for museum studies students or new museum professionals. **Daniel Whisenhunt**, a student assistant and intern at the Reece Museum, was the recipient of one of these awards recognized at the TAM Business Luncheon. Museum intern, **Rhonda Wilson**, also attended the conference. TAM will meet in the Jackson area in 1997. ◆

TESTAMENTS, OLD AND NEW, SUBJECT OF POET LYNN POWELL'S READING

East Tennessee native Lynn Powell gave an engaging reading in April from her recently published poetry collection, ***Old and New Testaments***, at the Reece Museum on East Tennessee State University's campus in Johnson City. *Old and New Testaments* won the prestigious 1995 Brittingham Prize from the University of Wisconsin.

The center and ETSU's Department of English co-sponsored the event. In her introduction, center assistant director Jane Woodside noted that six of the poems in Powell's prize-winning book first appeared in *Now & Then*. "I am especially glad to read here because *Now & Then* has been very important to me," Powell remarked before she began her reading.

"As I began writing these poems, particularly the poems about growing up Southern Baptist in East Tennessee, a few well-intentioned friends in the Northeast said to me, 'Well, I'm not sure you can use the word *Calvinist* in a poem.' But I persisted. Every time I wrote a Southern Baptist poem, I would send it to *Now & Then*. I felt that the magazine, especially poetry editors **Jo Carson** and then **Linda Parsons**, understood what I was trying to do. Those were very important acceptances for me along the way." ◆

Lynn Powell

"ALL JOIN HANDS":

CENTER/BIRTHPLACE OF COUNTRY MUSIC ALLY

The center is an active partner in the **Birthplace of Country Music Alliance** (BCMA), a regional group of organizations and individuals who work to conserve and promote the rich musical heritage of Appalachia. The BCMA sponsors concerts, educational programs, and public recognition for outstanding contributions to the region's music.

During the summer, BCMA sponsored a concert featuring the **ETSU Bluegrass Band** and performances by ETSU alumni, such as Tim Stafford of Blue Highway and Katie Doman. Proceeds were donated to the **Benny Sims Scholarship Fund**.

Upcoming events include the Bristol Tenn.-Va. **Autumn Chase Festival** concert with the Nashville Bluegrass Band and Mike Seeger on September 5 at the Paramount Theatre in Bristol and the 50th Anniversary Reunion of WCYB's "Farm and Fun Time," hosted by Ricky Skaggs, with tributes to Ralph Stanley and Mac Wiseman in November.

As part of its educational mission, the BCMA this year conducted a successful program for children from Kingsley Elementary School in Kingsport, at the Carter Fold in Hiltons, Va., with performances by the Larkin Family and members of Blue Highway. ◆

BLUEGRASS ROUNDUP:

The East Tennessee State University **Bluegrass and Country Music program** took center stage at a July concert at the Paramount Theatre in Bristol. Sponsored by the Birthplace of Country Music Alliance, a Bristol-based organization dedicated to calling attention to the crucial role played by the Tri-Cities of East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia in country and bluegrass music's early days, the concert featured **Blue Highway**, **Acoustic Endeavors** with **Warren Amberson** and **Kelly Green**, the **ETSU Bluegrass Band**, and **Katie Doman**.

Doman, an alumna of the ETSU Bluegrass Program who recently composed songs for Jo Carson's play *Hidden Heroines*, also served as the master of ceremonies.

Last May 19, the ETSU Bluegrass and Country Music Program was the subject of an article by **Rheta Grimsley Johnson**, who has succeeded Lewis Grizzard as a regular columnist for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. In addition to being carried in the Sunday edition of the Atlanta paper, the syndicated story was carried in some 60 newspapers. ◆

New Library, continued from page 1

site of two old dormitories which are being demolished to make way for the new building.

Total project costs (including previously approved planning funds) will top out at about $28 million. Joint venture architects Ken Ross Architects, Inc./ David Leonard Associates P.C. are designing the building. **Norma Myers** and **Dr. Marie Tedesco** of the archives are serving on the New Library Building Advisory Committee, which is working with the architects in planning the new library. Expect more updates in future newsletters. ◆

Mathis, continued from page 3

actually full-time," she says. "It was too hard to pass this job up."

In her last semester of working at the center, the ever-cheerful and hard-working Mathis edited ***News & Notes*** newsletter, which is distributed to over 200 people on the ETSU campus and in nearby communities. She would recommend the student position to future applicants. "You get to work with some good people -- and it isn't boring. You all keep us busy," she laughs. **"Every day was an adventure."** ◆

Giving, continued from page 5

community, exhibiting artists, and FORM. These collections serve to preserve and interpret the history and culture of the region and as a repository for significant works by regional artists and craftspersons. ◆

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- Members receive the center's newsletter, ***NewsCASS***, three times a year. Members are publicly acknowledged in the newsletter once each year.
- Members receive special member rates and discounts on books, recordings, and other publications or productions, study tours, study abroad, conferences, and programs.

In addition, your membership provides the center with these benefits:

- Memberships help us conduct the center's multiple programs and projects in teaching, research, and service in the Appalachian region.
- Members have opportunities for participating in center projects as volunteers.

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Friends of the center are also encouraged to support specific programs with special funds already established for them.

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WETS-FM:
APPALACHIAN PARTNER

WETS-FM at 89.5 on your radio dial is more than just a public radio station with a 100-mile radius. Operated by East Tennessee State University, the National Public Radio station works in partnership with several community organizations, including the center, to enhance and enrich the cultural life of our region.

The 13-week ***"Living Traditions"*** radio series, produced by WETS-FM in partnership with the William King Regional Arts Center of Abingdon, Va., and King Pharmaceuticals in Bristol, is currently being distributed to public radio stations nationwide via satellite. Listeners from coast to coast are hearing the sounds of Southern Appalachia, including Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys, Mike Seeger, Wayne Henderson, John Jackson, the Konnarock Critters, Sheila Kay Adams, Jannette Carter, and many more. These performances were recorded during the summer of 1995. Meanwhile, recording of the 1996 "Living Traditions" Concert Series is currently underway.

Last month, WETS-FM recorded an all-ETSU bluegrass program at the Paramount Center in Bristol. Sponsored by the Bristol-based Birthplace of Country Music Alliance, the July performance at the Paramount reflects the caliber of talent attracted to ETSU's Bluegrass and Country Music program. Listen to WETS for information on the broadcast date.

For Bristol's upcoming Autumn Chase Festival, WETS-FM will be hosting a "Blue Monday" concert on Labor Day, featuring the same varied blues fare that appears on the station's weekly program. The concert is scheduled for Bristol, Va., Cumberland Square Park Amphitheater, with the Paramount Center standing by as an alternative site in case of rain.

The center, *Now & Then* magazine, and the Appalachian-Scottish Studies Program support several programs on WETS-FM. ***"Bluegrass Review,"*** heard each Tuesday from 3-5 p.m., is underwritten by the center, while "Morning Edition," heard weekdays from 6-8 a.m., and "All Things Considered," aired weeknights from 5-7 p.m., receive support from *Now & Then.* The Appalachian-Scottish Studies program underwrites the nationally syndicated program, ***"The Thistle and Shamrock"*** with Fiona Ritchie, heard on Fridays from 1:30-2:30 p.m., as well as a recent local offering, ***"Music from the Stone Circle,"*** with Denise Cozad. ◆

THE KILTED APPALACHIAN:
APPALACHIAN-SCOTTISH STUDIES PROGRAM NOTES

In addition to summer courses which alternate between the ETSU campus in Johnson City and the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, the Appalachian-Scottish Studies Program now maintains a higher profile during the academic year. Inaugurated in 1988 by recently retired English professor Dr. Thomas G. Burton, it strives to support and serve as a clearinghouse for all students or members of the general public interested in Scottish and Irish studies.

From the highlands of Scotland to the highlands of Appalachia, the Appalachian-Scottish Studies Program is one of several programs supported by the center, along with ETSU's **Department of English** and **Office of International Programs**. The program's goal is a clearer understanding of the cultural relationships between Southern Appalachia and her mother roots, which wind their way back to ancestral Scotland and Ireland.

Last April, the program conducted its first week-long **Elderhostel** on Scottish and Irish culture, with a particular emphasis on music, storytelling, and dancing. Co-sponsored with ETSU's **School of Continuing Studies**, the elderhostel attracted 29 participants from all around the country. The elderhostel was so successful that the School of Continuing Studies is planning to offer the course twice a year, with a fall edition already scheduled for October 20-26.

The highlight of the year was the appearance of **Donald Alexander**, head of the Northern Ireland Bureau of the British Embassy in Washington, D. C., at an evening public gathering of over 100 Scottish and Irish cultural enthusiasts.

During the past year, the program has also helped scholars with their research; presented programs in high schools, museums, and at Burn's Night celebrations; found musicians for various events; and participated in the judging of an essay contest sponsored by Scottish Heritage, USA, Inc., a Pinehurst, N. C.-based organization dedicated to the exchange of people and ideas between Scotland and North America. In addition, the program coordinated and participated in an interview for a program on the Scotch-Irish that was broadcast by **BBC2 Radio** throughout the United Kingdom.

The **1996 summer program** was held on the ETSU campus and featured a host of scholars lecturing on folklore, music, history, literature, and more. There were several field trips taken during the class.

Plans are now underway for the **1997 trip** back to Scotland and Northern Ireland. Those interested in the 1997 summer course or in participating in a future elderhostel should contact **Stevan Jackson** at (423) 439-6340 or write to the Appalachian-Scottish Studies Program, Box 70556, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN 37614. ◆

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Humor *Now & Then*: Submit Articles Now

Just what are the future themes for *Now & Then*? The theme for the spring 1997 issue will be **Humor in Appalachia**. For this issue, we will, of course, be looking for humorous essays, photographs, poetry, and fiction. But we also invite articles that take a serious look at what it is Appalachians find funny -- and what it is that outsiders find amusing about Appalachians. The deadline for this issue is **November 1, 1996**.

Summer 1997 will see the publication of the **Appalachian Photography** issue. Again, we want not only good quality photographs featuring the region, we are also open to articles about photography and photographers up and down the Appalachian mountain chain, from southern New York to northern Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. This issue will include the winners of the 1997 **A Fresh Look at Appalachia** photography contest (see page 2 for details). We hope to raise additional funds to help us afford to print color photographs; we know for certain that we will print black-and-white images. The deadline for the photography issue is **March 1, 1997**.

For more information or to obtain writers' guidelines, write *Now & Then*, Center for Appalachian Studies & Services, East Tennessee State University, Box 70556, Johnson City, TN 37614-0556. ◆

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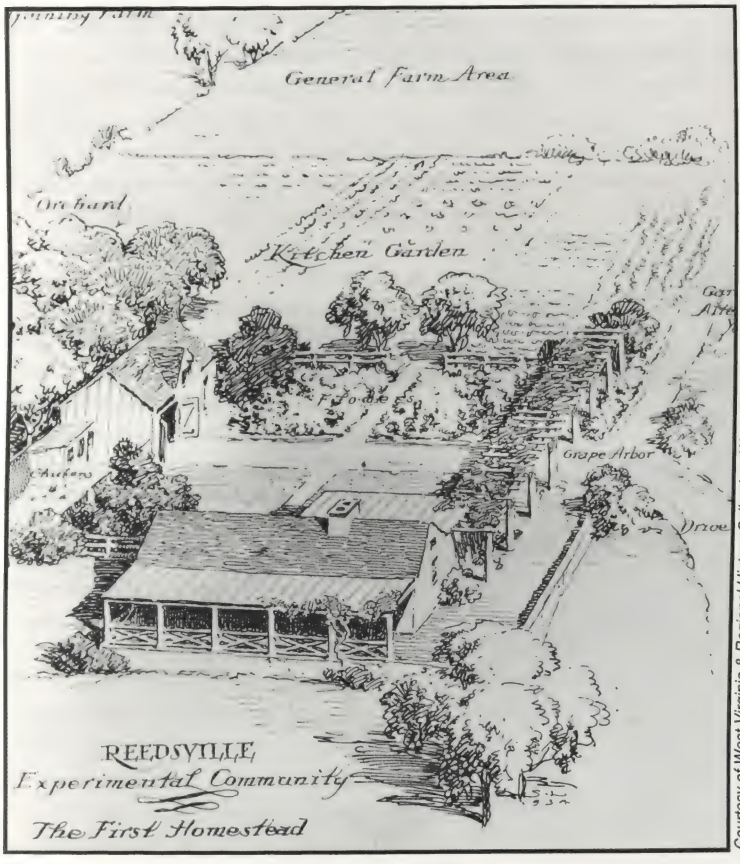
Arthurdale: Homesteading in West Virginia

by Deanna Hornyak

A New Deal subsistence community gave hope to unemployed miners and their families at the edge of Depression despair.

Back in the 1930s, the future looked bleak — in Appalachia certainly no less than in the rest of the United States. America was in the throes of the Great Depression and countless industrial workers found themselves out of a job. How could the country help these newly unemployed?



Courtesy of West Virginia & Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries

The first homesteads at Arthurdale, W.Va., were very similar in appearance to this early sketch of the planned community.

First lady and social activist Eleanor Roosevelt hoped that part of the answer could be found in Arthurdale, a small rural community cradled in the rolling hills of northern West Virginia, one which she was instrumental in creating.

Arthurdale made national headlines in 1933 as the very first subsistence community founded under the National Industrial Recovery Act. This act established the Subsistence Homestead division within the Interior Department. This division administered a $25 million revolving fund to assist workers by creating subsistence communities. The idea of the Subsistence Homestead program was to provide stranded miners, displaced industrial workers, migrant farm workers, and owners of marginal farmland with rural homes on small plots. Families could grow their own food and supply most of their other needs by bartering goods and services supplemented by part-time industrial employment. This was just the latest manifestation of a nationwide back-to-the-land movement that dated back to mid-19th century.

There has always been a belief in America that the individualism and self-reliance found in rural communities build a strong democracy and provide economic security for its citizens. The early democrats assumed that when people, wealth, and power are concentrated in urban areas, individual freedoms become more limited. Landowners were more likely than landless urban workers to elect a stable, responsible government that respected individual freedoms. So even while the country moved toward urbanization and industrialization, agrarianism remained the ideal.

Looking to the Past

People in America often face trying times by reaching back into the agrarian past to find a model for a better future. During the mid-1800s, for example, many realized that urban industrial workers were at the mercy of the boom-and-bust economy with no means of providing for themselves or their families during periods of low employment. As a result, several successful attempts were made to locate families on individual plots of land that would provide a subsistence living. For example, religious groups such as the Shakers at New Harmony, Ind., and the Mormons throughout Utah created self-reliant communities, and several private individuals and groups sponsored back-to-the-

Courtesy of Arthurdale Heritage, reproduced from the Collections of the Library of Congress

While waiting for their new homes, many prospective residents were paid $3 a day to help construct other buildings, such as the community center.

land colonies. In 1870, newspaper editor Horace Greeley founded a successful private colony in Colorado, and in 1898, the Salvation Army started three such farm communities in Colorado, California, and Ohio for the urban poor.

During the early 1900s, the back-to-the-land movement had a sizable following. Many books and magazine articles glorified the concept of "Three Acres and Liberty," which was viewed as a solution to urban problems such as overcrowding, unemployment, and crime. Leading politicians adopted the movement which romanticized rural life and its benefits. As early as 1913, Franklin Roosevelt, then New York's governor, supported legislation to provide suburban farms for city dwellers. He believed that "the political salvation of the country lies with country men and boys — not because they are more honest or more patriotic than their brothers in the cities, but because they have more time to think and study for themselves."

By 1933, with the entire country in the grips of the Depression and an unemployment rate in the neighborhood of 20 percent, the need for subsistence farms was at its peak. The Roosevelt Administration was looking for a pilot community which could serve as a model for the entire subsistence farm program. Lorena Hickok, an Associated Press reporter and friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, traveled throughout western Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia, observing the poverty and despair in the area coal camps. She was traveling the country in search of a story, but she was also looking for a place of despair — one in which Eleanor could begin her subsistence community.

Shacks and Gutters

She came across an area called Scotts Run, located near Morgantown in Monongalia County, W. Va., where she observed conditions that were appalling. "In a gutter, along the main street through the town, there was stagnant, filthy water which the inhabitants used for drinking, cooking, washing, and everything imaginable. On either side of the street were ramshackled houses, black with coal dust, which most Americans would not have considered fit for pigs. And in those houses every night children went to sleep hungry, on piles of bug-infested rags, spread out on the floors."

Conditions in Scotts Run had not always been as desperate as Hickok found them in 1933. Back in the late 1800s, the residents of this area were mostly farmers scattered over the countryside. But as the industrializing nation's need for coal increased, the population of the coal fields grew tremendously as coal companies brought African Americans and immigrants from southern and eastern Europe into the area to work in the mines. The coal business thrived during World War I and on into the 1920s.

This period of prosperity came to an end for two reasons: a seven-year strike by both unionized and non-unionized miners against the coal companies and the beginning of the Depression in the late 1920s. The Depression hit the coal fields especially hard. Local relief agen-

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The first 50 homes were prefabricated Cape Cod-style houses ordered from the E.F. Hodgson Company in Boston.

cies, along with the Philadelphia-based American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and the Extension Service at West Virginia University in Morgantown, were at work providing assistance to the unemployed miners and their families. They helped establish plot gardens to provide the families with fresh produce, they initiated children's feeding programs, and they taught miners crafts such as carpentry, furniture making, and shoe repair as a way of helping them develop other marketable skills.

In August 1933, Eleanor Roosevelt made an unannounced trip through Scotts Run. Unrecognized by the residents, she investigated conditions there. As Stephen Haid wrote in a 1975 West Virginia University dissertation: "At one company home, she met an employed miner who produced a pay envelope which left less than one dollar a week to care for a family with six children after deductions were made for his bill at the company store, his rent, and oil for his mine lamp. On the dining room table was a bowl of scraps for the noon meal. As Mrs. Roosevelt left the house, two of the children stood in the doorway, one little boy holding his pet white rabbit in his arms while his sister told Mrs. Roosevelt, 'He thinks we're not going to eat it, but we are.'"

What she saw prompted her to return to Washington and encourage FDR to initiate the Subsistence Homestead Act to provide relief for these miners. FDR was so persuaded by his wife's account of the conditions of the mining community at Scotts Run that he gave her and his assistant, Louis Howe, free rein to found a model subsistence community in West Virginia.

Arthur Rothstein. Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Later homes were designed with the harsh Preston County winters in mind. Forty frame houses designed by architect Stewart Wagner were faced with locally quarried stone.

The Reedsville Project

That October, at the recommendation of AFSC executive secretary Clarence Pickett, the federal government purchased the Arthur Farm from Pittsburgh hotelier Richard Arthur to serve as the site of the first homestead project. Located near Reedsville, W.Va. in Preston County, about 30 miles from Scotts Run, the farm was on land that had been surveyed by George Washington and was formerly part of the Colonel John Fairfax estate. Howe immediately ordered 50 prefabricated homes from the E. F. Hodgson Company in Boston to be ready for occupancy by Christmas.

With the actual houses on order, a committee set up by West Virginia University with members from area relief organizations solicited requests from miners who wished to relocate to the "Reedsville Project," as it was then called. The committee carefully screened candidates for their knowledge of farming, animal husbandry, other skills needed for subsistence living, and "proper attitudes and ambitions," in the words of the committee. They only considered intact nuclear families. But there was no point to even the most stable of foreign-born or African American families bothering to apply. Bushrod Grimes, a West Virginia Extension Service employee who served as the first project manager, explained that "in the garden club work we found that while the colored people were easy to work and pliable, they did not make much of an effort on their own count and foreigners were

Elmer Johnson. Courtesy of the Library of Congress

School children play in front of the Arthur mansion, which housed temporary classrooms before the school was built. The progressive education program included evening adult classes and a unique nursery school.

West Virginia & Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries

This Hodgson house interior shows examples of furniture produced by the Mountaineer Craftsmen Cooperative Association. The local industry produced furniture for use in the Arthurdale community and for sale to the general public.

even worse in this respect than the colored people." There were also protests from Preston County residents about bringing African Americans into the community.

Once chosen, the prospective residents moved to the town of Reedsville or into the Arthur mansion where they lived while they helped to build the community at a salary of $3 a day. Some of the men brought their families to the Scotts Run area; others waited until their homes were complete. Plagued with delays, Arthurdale's official opening missed the original target date of Christmas by six months. It was not until June 1934 that Eleanor Roosevelt returned to the area to dedicate Arthurdale's first homes.

A New Community Takes Shape

Recalling moving day, Glenna Williams, the then 17-year-old daughter of homesteaders W. W. and Hattie Williams, remarked, "All I know is that in one day's time, my life changed dramatically. We come from that period painted with the dark colors into this little white house set against a green backdrop of trees and green fields." The houses all had central heating, running water, electricity, bathrooms, refrigerators, and other "modern" amenities which were not common in rural America at the time. Each two- to five-acre site had a barn, a chicken coop, and an orchard.

But there were problems that surfaced almost immediately. The first 50 houses were basically Cape Cod summer homes not designed for the harsh Preston County winter. In addition, the press and opponents of the Roosevelts criticized the Reedsville project for the inclusion of "luxuries," such as plumbing and electricity. Eleanor Roosevelt was not swayed by such disapproval. She felt strongly that each family deserved a life without want, a life with a full measure of personal dignity. She was supported by U.S. Rep. Jennings Randolph, a freshman congressman from West Virginia who said, "You are pioneers in more than one sense ... Arthurdale is an experimental laboratory of the great homestead program. Success here means happiness to thousands of others in homesteads throughout the nation."

Courtesy of Arthurdale Heritage, Inc.

In 1984, a 50th anniversary celebration was held at Arthurdale. The following year a group of residents and supporters organized the nonprofit Arthurdale Heritage to begin preservation efforts.

C. E. Pynchon, general manager of the federal Division of Subsistence Homesteads, brought in architect Stewart Wagner, a consultant who worked under him, to design homes for the rest of the project. These homes were one-and-a-half or two-story cinder block-and-frame structures. Because they were without basements, a root cellar with a smokehouse was built on each site to preserve and store food. Seventy-five Wagner homes were built, along with 40 additional stone houses which used the same basic design as the original frame versions but which were faced with locally quarried stone.

The Arthurdale School

Simply moving people from Scotts Run to Arthurdale did not automatically create a cohesive community. Eleanor Roosevelt strongly believed that the school could serve as a focal point for the new community, and so she hired Elsie Clapp to

design and implement a plan for a progressive school. Elsie Clapp was a graduate of Vassar College and Columbia University and an experienced educator employed as principal of the Ballard Memorial School in Kentucky. She was also a disciple of educational reformer John Dewey, who was known for his belief in "the school as a social institution." Like Dewey, she perceived education as a cooperative endeavor that involved the entire community. When Clapp arrived in Arthurdale, she found that many homesteaders "could not shed a feeling of insecurity and suspicion although deeply stirred by the hope of a new life." She hoped that the citizens of the new village would feel a greater sense of belonging and trust as they helped to get Arthurdale's new school up and running.

She recruited local teachers whom she trained in her methods and brought in other teachers from her former school. Clapp strongly encouraged all of them to live in Arthurdale so that the teachers could interact daily with both the students and parents, engaging in such activities as attending community dinners and doing volunteer work. Students' mothers canned food and prepared hot lunches for the students by day, then had the opportunity to attend adult education classes along with other community members in the evening.

During that first year, classes were held in the newly built community complex dubbed Center Hall, in the old Arthur Mansion, and in two sheds. Thirty-six preschoolers and 246 other kindergarten, elementary, and secondary students enrolled in the school. The preschoolers included children as young as two years of age, who were enrolled in a unique nursery school program which combined health care, custodial care, and parental education.

Dewey visited Arthurdale in 1936 and pronounced it one of the best schools in the country. Yet until 1938, West Virginia failed to accredit the Arthurdale School. After Clapp left the homestead community in 1936 due to the precarious finances of the privately funded school, the Arthurdale School became part of the Preston County School system. Once the curriculum lost its progressive elements and met the West Virginia educational standards of the time, the school received its accreditation.

Despite the early demise of Arthurdale's educational experiment, the school system did accomplish what it set out to do: It fostered a deep and abiding sense of community in Arthurdale. Since a quality education for their children was important to the homesteaders, most were eager to participate actively in the school system. No other component of the community could have served to pull together so many people in such a short time.

The Beginning of the End

The residents organized themselves into various cooperatives which turned out goods designed both for the use of Arthurdale residents and for sale to the general public. For example, the Mountaineer Craftsmen Cooperative Association (MCCA) made furnishings, while a forge not only provided metalware for members of the community but also manufactured pewter and copperware which sold nationally. In conjunction with the MCCA, The Eleanor Roosevelt Farm Women's Association, a forerunner of the Extension Homemakers Club, built a weaving room for the women, where they produced rugs, coverlets, aprons, pillows, and some clothing. Other cooperatives included a farming co-op, a poultry co-op, and a store.

However, the Subsistence Homesteads division failed in its efforts to locate a major industry in Arthurdale, one which would have provided the part-time industrial employment so essential to the subsistence homesteading scheme. The Public Works Administration constructed factory buildings and tried

Living the Dream

In 1994, Arthurdale celebrated its 60th anniversary with the slogan "Arthurdale — The Dream Lives On." The dream of a better life seen in so many of the homesteading families is still alive within the community which today numbers approximately 1,000 inhabitants, some of whom are descended from the original residents. All of the 165 original homes are still standing, and four of the school buildings are still functioning.

In 1985, following the 50th anniversary celebration, a group of residents and supporters formed a nonprofit organization, Arthurdale Heritage. Arthurdale Heritage got to work, purchasing the badly deteriorated Center Complex and beginning to restore the original buildings and preserve the history of this first New Deal community. The organization has several projects in the works: forming a national New Deal Community Association to network various homestead and farmstead sites throughout the U.S.; looking for a home to purchase which they can then operate as a living history museum; and developing an archive for the entire homestead movement. A museum, forge, and a 1930s-vintage service station are already open to the public.

Now a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places, Arthurdale still has an intense communal spirit. For many residents, the dream of a good home in a quiet, peaceful, and prosperous community has truly been fulfilled.

—DH

out various enterprises which manufactured items such as vacuum cleaners, shirts, and radios. However, during the Depression, the government still had to subsidize many of the jobs. Then, once the nation began its massive effort to increase production during World War II, many of the men returned to the coal mines, the factories began operating at full capacity, and the unemployment rate virtually disappeared.

The Arthurdale project, and the 180 similar homestead projects located around the country, received its share of criticism from the media, including the local *Preston Republican,* other West Virginia newspapers, and national magazines such as *The Saturday Evening Post.*

To be sure, the program had serious problems. The homestead projects were expensive, and they never returned the initial investment to the government. Decisions by government agencies were often arbitrary and resulted in inconsistent policies. Over the course of the 14-year program, these New Deal communities found themselves passed around from government agency to government agency, each with their own particular agenda.

Even some members of the Roosevelt Administration had serious doubts. For example, as early as December 1933, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes confessed to his diary, "I am becoming concerned about the Reedsville, West Virginia, project. I am afraid that we are due for some criticism for our work there. In the first place, we undertook it too hastily. Colonel Howe, in a rash moment, told the President that we would start work within three weeks ... This was too short a time considering that no foundation had been laid. The result has been, in order to make good on this rash boast, that we have rushed ahead pell mell." By 1943, the Cooley Committee, a congressional committee headed by U.S. Rep. Harold D. Cooley of North Carolina and investigating the Farm Security Administration, carried out a full-scale witch hunt. Farm Security administrator C. B. Baldwin admitted then that the homestead projects should be discontinued. Finally, the Federal Public Housing Authority completed liquidation of the homestead projects in 1947.

Critics erroneously assume that just because these homestead projects were not unqualified successes, they were complete failures. Such critics fail to consider the significant social and economic impact that these programs had within the individual communities and the long-term consequences for the homesteaders and their descendants. For example, Arthurdale is one of many homestead communities that survived and prospered, with higher education levels, better housing, better jobs, and higher incomes than many of the surrounding coal camps. Although these communities could not achieve everything that the supporters of subsistence homesteads planned, they provided what was most important at the time — a refuge for the families who desperately needed a second chance. The dream may have had some fatal flaws, but it was a dream that made — and continues to make — a difference. N&T

Deanna Hornyak is the executive director and former secretary of the board of directors of Arthurdale Heritage, Inc. She is a graduate of Fairmont State College and a part-time public history student at West Virginia University. She resides in the Arthurdale community with her two children, Heather and Andrew, and her husband, Bob, who is the grandson of original homesteaders Clarence and Edna Ault.

Through the Window

You can see each twig on the trees
distinct against the new pale sky
dawning now to blue and you wonder

as your coffee grows warm beside you
who you will be today. The titmice
swing on the tube near the window

urging your kind side as they pick
the small round seeds from the sunflower
and spit them out on the path below.

You blink and the trunk holding
the feeder is Chuck your cat
then the trunk again, a trunk with yellow

eyes so early in the morning and
suddenly you're in a wonderland,
an Alice where all things are possible

but not always kind and you reach
for your mug and it is cold.
You squint at the sky, no longer blue

but a bright white like a bland screen
at the end of a home movie,
the film flapping around the spinning

reel of your imagination. The titmice sway
in front of it, painted silhouettes,
still looking your way. Chuck wanders

down the path and you rise to let him
inside, vowing not to use the seed mix
again as he pads rejects across the floor.

You move to the stove for coffee
and think of your daughter's latest
school detention, last night's Australian

wine, your newly widowed friend,
the dark liquid becoming so many
things at once as it fills your mug.

— Florence McNabb

Florence McNabb works for Davis-Kidd Booksellers in Knoxville, Tenn. She lives with her teenage daughter, two cats, and a dog.

Cities of the Future

by Janet Hearne

Tennessee school children build model cities and plan the future.

The fifth-grade students of the Omega Intellectually Gifted Program at Central Elementary School in Bristol, Tenn., have looked into the future — and the worlds they have imagined are fanciful, efficient, and sometimes sobering mirrors of their present.

Guided by their teacher Melanie Sluder, the students began working on a project in January in which they designed model cities of the future. They began with a trip to Jonesborough, Tennessee's oldest town. The students looked at 19th century architecture and toured the history museum. Using the past as a starting place, the students were priming their imaginations to make that leap into the next century and beyond.

A visit by Bristol, Tenn., city planner Rex Montgomery and planner Shari Brown helped firm up their ideas. Montgomery talked to the students about the planning process, even taking them through a mock planning session. Each student was then asked to write another city's chamber of commerce to find out about life in a different town.

With the groundwork behind them, the real effort began. Sluder divided the students into three groups and asked them to develop a model of their idea of a city of the future. Working in a group turned out to be the biggest problem.

"These gifted children have the answers," Sluder says. "They are always the first to raise their hands in class."

Because they had such strong ideas and opinions, it became difficult to arrive at a consensus. According to both Sluder and the students, the problem was solved when the children began writing in their journals about the issues that were giving them difficulties.

Susan Lawson

Kelly Whitaker, Jennifer Culp, Christen Rausch, and David Boling discuss the future of Discovery.

"When I saw they were having trouble," Sluder says, "I asked them to write about what was happening, to ask themselves how they could help work things out. Once they identified the problem and how they could help, then everyone got along better."

By mid-May, each group had designed and built a model city to scale and developed a brochure to describe their city. A look at their projects provides a glimpse not only into the future but also at the contemporary issues that concern our children.

Discovery

The city of Discovery, located on the planet Calamire, is set in the year 2070. Like the other projects produced by the class, it is a fanciful design put together with pipe cleaners, paper cutouts, and carefully constructed cardboard buildings that include a zoo, an aquarium, an indoor amusement park, and — something common to each of the cities — a mall.

"Our city is powered by a crystal from a big chunk of the sun," says Donnie Wilson, age 10. Adds David Boling, 11, "There's a force field over the city. The grass is artificial, but it looks, feels, and smells like real grass. You don't have to water it though."

Efficiency seems to be a hallmark of Discovery. Food is a spray, the children explain, that stops stomach acids so you aren't hungry. Money doesn't exist. Instead, citizens receive computerized credits in their accounts that are accessed for purchases. "If you try to pay for something and you don't have credits," Jennifer Culp, 10, says, "it won't let you buy it."

This group even took into consideration a child's concern

about bad weather. "Our amusement park is indoors so you can have fun when it's raining," says Kelly Whitaker, 10.

Despite its efficiency, Discovery does have social ills, as evidenced by the inclusion of a jail. According to Culp, Discovery has very strict government rules. "There's not a lot of crime," she says, "But we have a jail just in case."

Sadly, when the children envisioned the future, they could not get past the fact that "there's always going to be somebody angry," as Wilson put it. Boling agrees. "It's hard to see a society with no crime."

Susan Lawson

Aquatic Paradise is pieced together, bit by bit, by its ardent builders.

Aquatic Paradise

The most outstanding feature of Aquatic Paradise, an underwater city located on the planet Aquatica is its mass transit system. The Zeto Rail, named after the imaginary city's president, is a system of buses holding 3,000 people apiece. According to its designers, the Zeto Rail has three separate buses: one for older/handicapped citizens, one for the youth of the city, and one for teenagers and adults who have jobs. Each of the buses can fly, but only one bus actually has wings. Alana Loveday, 10, explains, "The elderly don't believe anything unless they see it, so we have to put wings on their bus."

Life in Aquatica, as in Discovery, is streamlined.

"In the church, there's seven different religions," Kelly Wolf, 10, says. "In the business building, there are all kinds of businesses, and you make $20 an hour."

"In Aquatica, you have to go to school only one week a year," Beth Evans, 10, says. "You have to spend one solid week there and spend the night and everything. You put zappers on, and they just zap things into your head."

Aqua-Dome City

Aqua-Dome City is also underwater, but it has the distinction of being the only one not located on another planet. Aqua-Dome is situated in the Atlantic Ocean on Earth, "very near the East Coast," as one child explains. The city lies under a protective dome which cannot be penetrated. Within the dome, there are seven separate smaller domes that are centers for housing, tourism, government, food and shopping, recreation, industry, and medicine.

Susan Lawson

Jeremy Ringley works diligently on the plans for Aqua-Dome City.

"Housing and school are in the same place," says Stephanie Scheuer, 11. "You teach yourself by computer in your own house. The government doesn't have any major laws except, like, no killing. A submarine helicopter goes around and watches people so people don't try anything. It also makes sure visitors don't steal anything."

In Aqua-Dome, life seems orderly and controlled. Even the animals have been biologically engineered. "We have made-up animals," Scheuer says. "We change the DNA cells. We can change the way they feel, act, and look. The only way to get more animals is to make them ourselves. They can't breed."

Concern for the environment is evident in the planning of Aqua-Dome. Their model addresses both pollution and rain forest depletion. "Aqua-Dome has its own oxygen generator in the government dome," Jeremy Ringley, 10, says. "If the pollution gets too high, it can turn pollution into oxygen for the city."

"We didn't use wood because of the rain forest," Scheuer explains. "And because we're underwater, we don't hurt the ozone layer. When we talked about our city, we all agreed the future should be better."

Sluder sees the project as a success, mainly because of the creative approaches the children took to solving problems faced by cities and for their ability to see the larger picture. "One of the biggest things I saw was that they showed empathy for all citizens of the city and weren't just focused on their own interests," Sluder says. "They were able to reach beyond their own child's point of view to see that all types of people live in a city." N&T

A free-lance writer living in Johnson City, Tenn., Janet Hearne has published several articles in Now & Then *and other publications. She is the author of the book,* Only in California.

Creating Communities of Hope in Eastern Kentucky

Glen Taul

Once again, Kentucky takes the lead in fashioning a vision for a whole region.

On stage sat the lone figure of Kentucky's new governor. In front of him sat about 300 members of the Kentucky Appalachian Advisory Council, an independent citizens' group created in 1995 which reports to the Kentucky Appalachian Commission, a board which advises the governor on Eastern Kentucky policy matters. Council members had taken every chair in the 250-seat theater and sat in all of the folding chairs placed in the aisles. The rest stood anywhere they could.

Last April, Democratic Governor Paul Patton, a native of Eastern Kentucky, met with a varied group of East Kentuckians at Hazard Community College in Hazard, Ky., to talk about development issues. The ensuing conversation was part of an ongoing process begun in 1994. That process promises to give citizens a vital voice in setting development priorities not only for Eastern Kentucky but also for the entire Appalachian region. It involves creating partnerships between ordinary citizens and government, bringing diverse individuals and organizations to the table, thus enabling people to act effectively for change in their communities and their region and to plan for truly comprehensive development.

Formed by Patton's predecessor and fellow Democrat, Brereton Jones, the Kentucky Appalachian Advisory Council is open to anyone interested in promoting development in Eastern Kentucky. At the April meeting, both Council members and the governor had no difficulty in agreeing that citizens and government should be partners in planning development. The two camps differed, however, on some fundamental assumptions.

The Council generally believed that government should be significantly involved in both social and economic planning. The Governor, in contrast, emphasized economic over social development and advocated a more traditional supporting role for government, with the government helping to build physical infrastructure and supporting education and social services. This disagreement may prove an impediment to an effective working relationship between the Council and the Governor, but it is too early in the conversation to know.

Catching Up

Despite their philosophical differences, the Council did not argue with Patton's basic goal: to bring Kentucky even with the rest of the nation in economic performance, income, and education. "That will never happen unless Appalachian Kentucky is an equal partner," said Patton, in reference to state processes and policies. Currently, if Eastern Kentucky were not included in quality of life indicators, the Commonwealth of Kentucky would nearly match national averages.

With 39 of its 49 Appalachian counties currently classified as distressed, Kentucky has a greater concentration of impoverished areas than any other Appalachian state, including West Virginia. The 29 percent poverty rate in largely rural Eastern Kentucky is about double that of both the rest of Appalachia and the remainder of the nation; the 1994 per capita income of $12,978 in Eastern Kentucky is only 60 percent of the U.S.'s per capita income. While 75 percent of all Americans have a high school education, only about half of all adult East Kentuckians possess a diploma or a GED.

To achieve his goal, Patton wants to cooperate with the Council to prepare a comprehensive program, drawn from parts of a 1994 strategic plan, for Eastern Kentucky by the year 1999. "Eastern Kentucky needs a mix of primary factories, satellite factories, and homegrown entrepreneurs," Patton says. "We cannot solve our problems with solutions imposed from Washington. We have to solve problems with Washington's help."

The comprehensive program suggested by Patton will develop specific steps for implementing recommendations articulated in 1994 in the region's strategic plan, entitled *Communities of Hope*. This was a strategic plan formulated with unprecedented input

Kenneth Murray. Courtesy of the ARC.

Kentucky Governor Paul Patton answers a question about a development issue from a Kentucky Appalachian Advisory Council member at a meeting held last April in Hazard, Ky.

from rank-and-file citizens from throughout Eastern Kentucky.

Communities of Hope advocates a *regional* vision. It calls for creating a quality of life that includes warm, affordable housing; life-enhancing work; freedom from crime; and access to education, health care, justice, recreation, and other human services "for *all* citizens regardless of ability to pay." Looking to the future, Eastern Kentucky communities see themselves as "communities of hope, where rural life and rural people are not an anachronism but a blessing."

Program 60

The process that produced this strategic plan is a renewal of one begun 40 years ago. In 1956, the Kentucky Junior Chamber of Commerce under the leadership of the late John D. Whisman, then a marketing manager for Irving Air Chute Company in Versailles, Ky., formed the Citizens' Regional Development Council. After floods devastated Central Appalachia the following year, the Development Council played a leading role in forming the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission to help the region get back on its feet.

Under Whisman's direction, the Planning Commission prepared a strategic plan for Eastern Kentucky called Program 60. It called for making underdeveloped resources in the region, such as transportation, education, tourism, recreation, and timber, work more for the benefit of the region's inhabitants.

Program 60's development plan was so comprehensive that it required more resources to implement it than Kentucky could provide. So then-Governor Bert Combs and Whisman, along with Maryland Governor Millard Tawes, devised a strategy to tap into federal resources by bringing together the governors of the other Appalachian states. This Conference of Appalachian Governors lobbied the Kennedy administration to form a federal-state partnership for regional development. Their efforts led to the creation in 1965 of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the Washington, D.C.-based regional economic development agency charged with working with federal, state, and local governments to help foster job-producing growth in business and industry in Appalachia, defined by the ARC as a 200,000 square mile region that follows the spine of the Appalachian mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi.

Drawing in the Activists

There are marked parallels between the Program 60 strategic planning process and the current effort, begun in 1994.

> "Even in one of America's most severely economically distressed areas, the human spirit is alive with hope and fired by a new generation of leadership."

Like the *Communities of Hope*, Program 60 invited public input. Each member of the Eastern Kentucky Regional Planning Commission chaired a committee on specific issues, such as education and tourism, and then held public meetings in different parts of the region. At these meetings, the usual community leaders — lawyers, doctors, clergymen, politicians, realtors, and coal operators — shaped the goals for development.

But the most recent strategic planning effort differed from its predecessor in its insistence on engaging citizens from an even broader range of viewpoints in the shaping of public policy. The Kentucky Appalachian Task Force, formed in December 1993 by former Governor Jones and charged with generating a comprehensive strategic plan for the region, made a conscious attempt to draw in activists from all quarters of the region. These have included representatives from organizations ranging from Berea College to BellSouth; from Appalshop, the Whitesburg, Ky. media cooperative, to the U.S. Forest Service; and from the Christian Appalachian Project, a nondenominational service organization working in Eastern Kentucky since 1964, to the state's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet.

This very broad-based strategic planning effort is partly the result of a movement to motivate and educate ordinary folk about how best to exercise leadership responsibilities in their home communities. Until recently, there had been relatively little participation by Eastern Kentuckians in the civic life of their communities. But starting about a decade ago, leadership development programs were created by organizations such as the University of Kentucky's (UK) Appalachian Center and Berea College's Brushy Fork Institute, which was dedicated to helping citizens of communities in four Appalachian states.

Both these programs helped individuals and groups acquire and strengthen skills that would allow them to participate more effectively as citizens and to help bring about change in their communities. Other groups such as the Eastern Kentucky-based Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, a group started in 1981 to empower citizens to work for a more just society in Kentucky, and the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, a nonprofit, volunteer organization that has advocated improved education for Kentucky since 1983, motivated and trained non-elites to take active parts in addressing community issues.

The Task Force

The citizen-based development planning effort that resulted in the *Communities of Hope* began in December 1993 when Al Smith, John Stephenson, Ron Eller, and John Whisman persuaded Governor Jones to create the Kentucky Appalachian Task Force. All four men were intimately familiar with the issues affecting Eastern Kentucky. Stephenson was president of Berea College at the time. Eller was — and is — director of UK's Appalachian Center. Smith had been a federal co-chairman of the ARC from 1979 to 1982, while Whisman had been instrumental in establishing the ARC and then went on to serve as a regional representative for several Appalachian states from 1966 to 1976.

At the outset, the Task Force's mission was narrowly defined. In 1995, Governor Jones was about to begin his tenure as the ARC's state co-chair, an office which rotates among the governors of the 13 Appalachian states every year. He wanted, first of all, to know how Ken-

tucky could take maximum advantage of the ARC's funding to the state. But he also wanted an assessment of existing development programs affecting Appalachian Kentucky, ideas for an expanded region-wide Appalachian development program, and a comprehensive plan specifically for Eastern Kentucky that would address natural resource, human resource, and technological issues.

After Stephenson's retirement from Berea College, Eller took over the leadership of the Task Force in June 1994. In mid-1994, the body issued an interim report which recommended reinvigorating the planning and development process for which Kentucky's Area Development Districts had been responsible since 1966.

The Task Force members recommended strengthening existing institutions, such as the Area Development Districts, colleges and universities, and nonprofit organizations through collaboration among government, nonprofit, and private for-profit programs delivering a whole range of economic and social services to Eastern Kentucky. And the group urged opening up the development process to more effective, broader public input.

The Task Force implemented these suggestions through the creation of 12 Program Area Committees dealing with topics such as natural resources and telecommunications. With these committees, a varied group of organizations — such as the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet; the Owsley County Action Team, a citizen-based community planning and economic development organization; the Mud Creek Clinic, which provides health care services to the poor in Floyd County, Ky.; the Letcher County judge-executive (the county's elected CEO) — and ordinary people all assessed existing programs operating in Eastern Kentucky and identified development priorities.

Between September and December 1994, over 500 citizens contributed to the work of the committees in biweekly meetings held throughout Appalachian Kentucky. One of the participants, director of Save the Children's Appalachian program Marian Colette, reports that "since I began participating in 1994, I have been struck by the fact that 100 and 200 people have been going to the general sessions of the Task Force and then the Advisory Council. An additional 100 participated in the subcommittees. Whenever *that* many people show that they want to be involved, we need to capitalize on it."

When the Task Force delivered *Communities of Hope* to Governor Jones in January of 1995, the process entered a new phase. A few months afterwards, Jones created two new bodies to make the invisible vision visible. By providing ongoing public input into policy discussions, the broad-based Kentucky Appalachian Advisory Council serves a similar function as the Task Force's Program Area Committees by bringing representatives from diverse groups and individuals together for open discussion and information gathering. Members are volunteers who serve as long as they wish.

The Commission

The Kentucky Appalachian Commission, whose original 15 members were assembled by the governor in October 1995, included 10 appointed members, 2 members elected by the Council, the president of the Eastern Kentucky Leadership Conference, Jones' Cabinet secretary, and his alternate to ARC. The Commission was to act on projects recommended by the Council, to bring Eastern Kentucky's development agenda before the state's policy makers, and to serve as a link with decision makers in Washington, D.C., especially those appropriating funds at the ARC. Members of the Commission serve four year terms.

A blue-ribbon panel, the original Commission included former Kentucky governor Edward Breathitt, Ron Eaglin, the president of Morehead State University, Court of Appeals Judge Sara Combs, and Hilda Legg, director of the Center for Kentucky Rural Economic Development, a nonprofit intergovernmental agency started in 1988 to coordinate rural development programs operated by several agencies into "one-stop" service for Eastern and Southern Kentucky. The center is located in Somerset, Ky.

"Both the Council and the Commission have been creating a new venue for the discussion of development in Eastern Kentucky," says Eller. "They bring diverse players together so that they can move beyond having small groups and backroom power brokers be the only ones to make public decisions in the mountains."

Through the Council and the Commission, people with dissimilar viewpoints are talking to each other in ways many had only dreamed about. Commissioner Jane Stephenson, who is also director of the New Opportunity School for Women in Berea, Ky., recently wrote in a Lexington *Herald-Leader* column that both the Council and the Commission "have become successful as they have evolved … because they are different. The difference is pretty straightforward. All of us involved up until now have worked hard … to let citizens from a wide variety of backgrounds have their say. We have worked hard to be open and collaborative. We have worked hard to listen."

Kenneth Murray. Courtesy of the ARC

Attending the April 1996 Kentucky Appalachian Commission meeting were (l to r) Kevin Goldsmith, the governor's ARC alternate; Marian Colette, director of the Appalachian Program for Save the Children; state Representative Rocky Adkins; Governor Patton; commission chair Ron Eller; Frank Hamilton, former Johnson County, Ky., school superintendent; Sara Combs, Judge of the Kentucky Court of Appeals; Ron Eaglin, president of Morehead State University; Lois Combs Weinberg; and Bill Weinberg.

The Power Brokers

By the time Governor Patton met with

the Council in April, partnerships based on faith and trust among all the various organizations that had been drawn into the process were well on their way to being built. However, one group was conspicuously absent from the table. This group included the established power brokers: elected officials, department heads of state government, and community leaders such as lawyers, businessmen, and industrialists who have direct access to the resources necessary to implement development policies.

By recently enlarging the Commission to 36 members, Governor Patton has brought them to the table as well. He added state cabinet secretaries and representatives of the Area Development Districts, mayors, county judge-executives, and trade, development, and nonprofit organizations working in Eastern Kentucky.

Patton also says he envisions a center in Hazard, Ky., located in one of Appalachia's most distressed areas, where state cabinet-level officials can come to listen to the development priorities of the area's citizens via the Council. "We need for them to know what our agenda is," says Patton. "Let's get them all in a room right here in Eastern Kentucky where they can't get away from us."

The Governor's dialogue with the Council in April was a dynamic exchange in which public officials and private individuals, holding fundamentally different assumptions about the role of government in development, moved toward creating partnerships, understanding development priorities other than their own, and building a civic community. In one exchange, the governor's response illustrates the marked differences in view about government's role in development. The question centered on whether economic development should include jobs created by social service enterprises.

"How do we get ARC to recognize that operations like child development centers are part of economic development?" asked Geri Martin, director of Hazard/Perry County Community Ministries. "ARC shouldn't deny funds for building child care centers because they are not considered economic development."

"Government should support activities that create wealth rather than spend money," Patton said. "If we are sending money out, then something must bring money in. It must bring new money in."

Reaching a Watershed

The April meeting between the Council and the Governor marked a watershed for the planning and policy setting process that began two years ago. On the one hand, it culminated an effort by Eastern Kentuckians to make the shaping of public policy for regional development a joint venture between ordinary citizens and decision makers. It signaled a greater commitment by state government to work as a partner with citizens and with nonprofit and private for-profit organizations to shape the future direction of regional development.

On the other hand, this experiment in creating a new, more inclusive civic process for setting development priorities is clearly in a fragile stage. "The challenge now," says Eller "is tapping available resources to achieve comprehensive development that is community-focused, democratic, and sustainable." With the power brokers taking their places at the table, it will be no easy task to convince community-based organizations, nonprofits, area development districts, and average citizens to stay put. These citizen participants in the decision-making process have to be convinced that by remaining, they will have a greater ability to shape policy.

The power brokers need to be convinced that the dialogue that is part of this process will benefit both them and the region in the long run. If they can work with the process rather than trying to control it, then Eastern Kentucky can develop a quality of life and an economy that is both sustainable and fruitful for most of its people.

A New Model

Recognition of the importance of citizen-based participation in the planning and development process began in the late 1980s. It seems to be an idea whose time has finally arrived. "ARC began by supplying seed money to form organizations such as the Brushy Fork Institute at Berea," according to Geri Storm-Gevanthor, senior advisor at the ARC. A year after Kentucky made broad-based civic participation an essential part of strategic planning and development for the Appalachian portion of the state, the ARC gave the approach greater visibility by incorporating it into its new strategic plan released this year, "Setting a Regional Agenda." Kentucky's decision-making process is being held up by the ARC as a model for other Appalachian states.

Experience so far has shown that Eastern Kentucky has the vision, the leadership, and the social resources to give citizens a feeling of control over public issues vital to the region's future. The challenge has been — and will continue to be — mobilizing and organizing people from very different segments of society with divergent assumptions and values to work for a common agenda.

Eller told the Governor and the Council at the April meeting that "the willingness of leaders like yourselves to come together to share ideas, to overcome differences, and to work together for the common good is an example to the rest of the country that even in one of America's most severely economically distressed areas, the human spirit is alive with hope and fired by a new generation of leadership." N&T

Glen Taul is a doctoral candidate in history at the University of Kentucky. He is also a project archivist working on the papers of John D. Whisman.

Gift

More stars
here in my coastal sky than in yours
where mountains hem the night in
like a gusset and where even your moon
hangs by a tailor's tack from
high selvages of rock or from one
topmost twisted pine. Never
for you such a glittery toss of cloth,
such a generous awning
marsh to marsh

which nightly pleases me so
that I think of you
and I wish for you
what you may not wish for yourself:
this sky stocked with stars,
the near water.

— Dana Wildsmith

Dana Wildsmith's first collection of poems, Alchemy, *was published in the summer of 1995 by The Sow's Ear Press, Abingdon, Va.*

Grand Opening

Jeff Shearer

Our town paper is the *Thrifty Nickel*. Call us backward, but it isn't that we aren't readers. It's just that when you're trying to scratch out a living between growing burley and working in the shirt factory, there isn't much time to be found for making news, let alone reading about it. But when Lyle McCabe placed an ad in last week's *Thrifty Nickel*, the whole town took notice. It read the same as the huge orange poster with Magic Marker letters he had Vernon the stockboy tape to the store's front window:

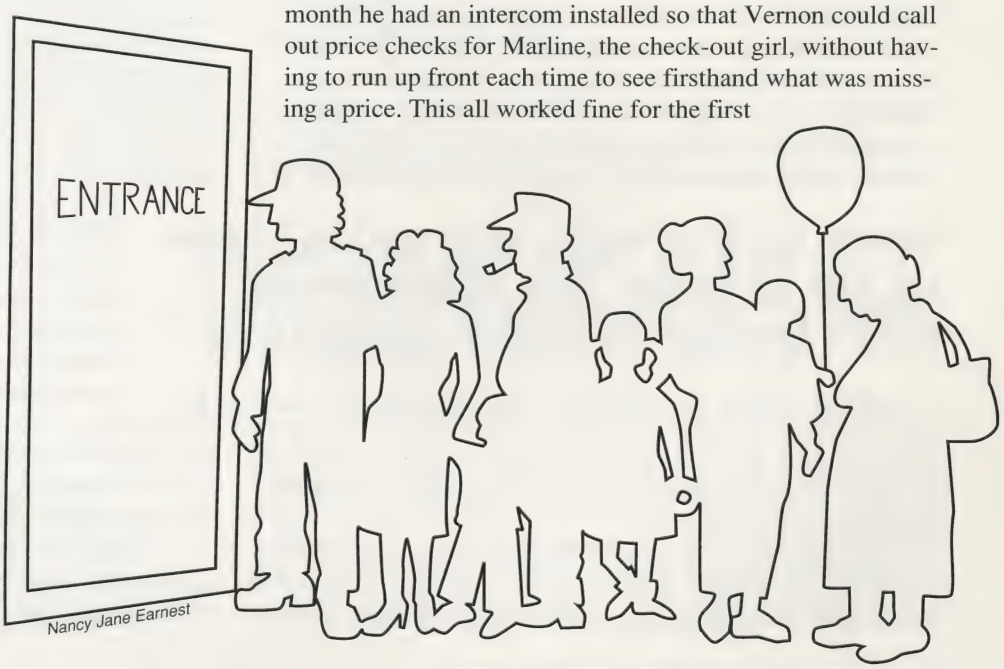
Grand Re-Opening!
McCabe's Market
Saturday, Oct. 3. 8 a.m.
To Dedicate the new "ELECTRIC EYE DOOR"
Come early. Free coffee and donuts.
Don't miss "The Event of the Year."
See our "NEW NAME."

None of us had ever been to a re-opening before, and anyone under forty had missed the original opening of McCabe's Market when Lyle's father, Walter, first opened the doors. And even those who remember it wouldn't have called it grand. But Lyle had just come back after two years at the community college up in Wheeler and had decided it was time to wake up this town. Up until then, none of us even knew we were snoozing. The thing about Lyle, though, was that he came back here at all. Most of the kids who get a taste of life outside this town never even bother to wave good-bye.

Walter didn't say much about all the ideas that his son was forever trying to explain to him. He'd just sit there listening to him talk on and on with the whole set of new words he had packed home from that college. When Lyle finally wore himself out, Walter would take a can off the shelf, inspect it, and say something like, "We need to get Vernon to wipe the tops of these cans. People notice little things, you know."

We could tell Walter wasn't all that keen on this new electric eye door. The same way he hadn't been so keen on the other changes that Lyle had put in motion. Like the tanning booth he brought in and set up in the storage room next to the meat counter. That was during the period when Lyle couldn't stop talking about diversifying. He explained to his father all about fixed costs and how the tanning booth was going to create what he called cross-selling opportunities. But whatever opportunity Lyle had in mind was cut short when Reverend Potter opened the door to the storage room one day and found his daughter with one of the Raney boys getting an unadvertised two-for-the-price-of-one tan. After that, Walter bought some glass and a rotisserie motor and had the tanning bed converted into one of those chicken roasters. It was good for about 20 four-pounders. Miss Feeley, the high school librarian, said Walter was the only person she knew who had the moxie to make a chicken roaster out of a turkey.

Lyle didn't let the cross-selling disappointment keep him down, though. He suddenly went soft on diversifying and started talking about time-and-motion studies and empowerment. He called it the marriage of hard and soft science and said how the two may seem like opposing concepts, but to him they were the bride and groom of a good operation. Within a month he had an intercom installed so that Vernon could call out price checks for Marline, the check-out girl, without having to run up front each time to see firsthand what was missing a price. This all worked fine for the first



Nancy Jane Earnest

day or two, and Lyle would raise his eyes at his father every time Marline called out for a price check, as if to say, "Nothing like efficiency."

Some people were saying the intercom idea was on its way to becoming Lyle's blue-ribbon inspiration. And it would've been, except for the little speak-listen switch on Vernon's end that got stuck in the speak position at the same time an entire pyramid of My-T-Fine peaches collapsed, leaving Vernon cussing like a convict at every can as he set about putting the pyramid back together. Everyone in front of the checkout counter stared along with Marline at the speaker above her register as Vernon surprised them all with words that no one knew he could even pronounce, let alone use to describe a can of peaches. After that, Walter had Vernon go back to manual price checks.

Lyle's attempts at progress didn't go unnoticed. When Frank Boggs and his hunting buddies cornered Walter at the annual barbecue, Frank took the opportunity to go on and on about how Lyle was keeping the whole town entertained with his big business ideas. Frank asked Walter, "Lyle got any of them value-added failures for us this week, Walter?" His buddies laughed. "Guess he came by that hairbrain of his honestly, don't you think, Walter?" Walter didn't look at him, but stared off at the kids in the gunnysack race. Then, as if he were asking about the weather, Walter asked, "Your boy coming home this year for Christmas, Frank? Atlanta sure must be pretty at Christmas to keep someone away four years running." Frank turned and walked away. Everyone knows that where Frank Junior's at, you don't get permission to leave just because it's Christmas.

The electric eye door, though. Even Walter couldn't believe everybody was making such a fuss about the prospect of getting a chance to have one in their own town. Lyle had gone all the way to Asheville when he heard they were gutting the old Sears store. He returned as the highest bidder on a vintage Oppenheimer electric eye door. It was the only thing people talked about all week. Ivy Lineweaver had seen one of these at the A&P in Wheeler and tried to describe how the door somehow knew you were coming and heaved itself open just when you thought your nose was going right through the glass. Darrell Gummer got excited and said, "Maybe it's the type on that Star Track show — the kind that disappears into the wall." Everyone agreed, though, that that would've required building a wall onto the sidewalk for the door to disappear into, so logic would tell you it must be the A&P type.

Most of the kids who get a taste of life outside this town never even bother to wave good-bye.

The trouble was, Lyle could only get his hands on one door, not two, so the decision had to be made on whether the door was to be the entrance or the exit door. When Lyle paid his father the courtesy of asking for his advice, Walter said, "Well, since people coming in usually have two hands available, and people going out usually have none, I'd have to favor the going-out side."

Lyle admitted that the going-out side had a credible argument, but from strictly a business perspective, he argued, you always want to make it easy to access your operation. "Besides," he said, "everything you can do to delay a customer's departure is another dollar in gross sales." The business perspective won out, and the electric eye door was to become the new entrance.

When Saturday finally arrived, the hopes to be the first one to try out the door had everyone up early. The women's Stitch-and-Bitch Club called off their usual Saturday get-together so as not to miss the event. So did the 4-H Club.

At seven o'clock, the first pickups began to pull into the store's parking lot, and piles of kids sitting on half cords of firewood tumbled out of the back of each one. They ran to jockey for a good position in the line forming in front of the tent awning that Lyle had set up to allow him to unveil the new electric eye door. Those who weren't lined up to try out the door were trying to figure out the new name of the store, which Lyle had covered up with a sheet of black plastic. By seven thirty, the line to try out the door already reached around the corner of the store, and there was some pushing and shoving taking place that required Lyle to come out and referee between the Ricker kids and the Lineweavers, with both families claiming to have gotten there first. Lyle finally made them count off by twos and had them alternate one family, then the next. This, plus the doughnuts he passed out, settled them down in no time. Lyle wasn't about to let anything ruin this grand opening.

After getting the free coffee and doughnuts going, Lyle rushed back behind the tent awning to check on the progress Sturgis, the electrician, was having with the final wiring of the door. Sturgis had been there since four in the morning and was supposed to have had all this done Friday night, except for the fact that he had just recently taken up playing pinochle with Miss Feeley and her sister on Friday afternoons and stayed on a little later than usual that particular night to help Miss Feeley check out some circuits. That's where he still was at four a.m. when Lyle finally found him and dragged him down to the market to wire up the door.

With all the running around Lyle was doing to get ready, Walter decided that he'd just as soon do his time-and-motion study over at the Say When Cafe, which was just across the street from the market and gave a real good view of the general activity going on that morning. "That store of yours is sure humming this morning, Walter," Paula said as she brought him a cup of coffee.

"Re-engineering," Walter said, without looking up.

"What's that, Walter?"

"Re-engineering. The way Lyle has it figured, we can up our peak hourly sales. Won't even have to hire on extra help."

"You don't say."

"That's what he tells me. You got any more of that gravy for these biscuits?"

By five to eight, the crowd numbered over two hundred. We saw people we hadn't seen since the feed store caught fire. There were even people who showed up from the next county over. They showed us the copy of the *Thrifty Nickel* that had found its way over to Short Pump, about 20 miles from here. An ad that big, they said, was enough to tell them this was going to be worth seeing.

All this time, Lyle kept ducking in and out of the store, checking on Sturgis's progress with the wiring and then coming back out with an armload of doughnuts to pass out to the crowd.

At quarter past eight, Sturgis poked his head out from the awning and announced, "She's ready." The crowd let out a cheer, and the whole line of people who had taken to sitting and talking got up in one huge motion and pressed toward the door, held back only by Lyle, who insisted on saying a few words. He held up a megaphone he had borrowed from one of the volunteer firemen.

"What we're here to celebrate today, ladies and gentlemen, is just a start. This is just a glimpse at the progress this town is going to see come its way. And I'm proud that my family played a part in making this happen. So allow me to present to you the new name for our store. It's a name that I think says it all. A name that gives purpose and meaning to what a grocery store should be. OK, Vernon, pull the rope."

At this point, Vernon, who had been stationed up on the roof, gave a tug on the nylon cord that held the large sheet of black plastic over the name of the store. Where the words "McCabe's Market" once graced the store, huge yellow plastic letters spelled the new name: "FAST SACK."

At first, no one said anything. You could see people's lips move as they tried it out on their tongues: "Fast Sack. Fast Sack." Finally, Ivy Lineweaver gave a short little clap, not too certain, but it was enough to make the person next to her clap, and soon all two hundred people in line were clapping and nodding their heads in approval.

Lyle was eating it up. But the kids were getting restless, and one of the Rucker kids finally shouted, "What about the door? We want to try out the door!" This set off all the other kids until Lyle squeezed his way up to the front of the line and waved his hands up and down.

"Don't let anyone ever tell you this town's afraid of progress," he shouted and pulled away the tent awning.

The electric eye door was a piece of work. Lyle had made Vernon go through a whole box of steel wool to give it back its original shine. The glass was polished till it looked new, and a neatly stenciled "Entrance" appeared across the glass.

"OK, folks," Lyle yelled into the megaphone. "Now you're going to have to work with me on this. I want everyone to put out their hand and give one arm's length between you and the person in front of you. We can't be bunched up. That's right. One arm's length. Now those people in the rear are going to have to back up to give us room up here in front. That's right. A little more, please. That's good."

Those of us watching thought the line now looked like one long chain of paper clips.

"Please wait for the door to fully return to a closed position before you take your turn. All right. I think we're ready." He looked down at Sonny Rucker, the first in line. "You may now begin."

Sonny took one big step toward the door. With what sounded like fizz from a can of soda, followed by a sort of thunk, the door heaved itself open, and the boy turned and raised his arms in victory. The adults clapped. The kids yelled at him to go on through, which he did, and then one by one the whole line proceeded through the same motion, each person stopping to wait for the door to close, then stepping forward to trigger the electric eye and looking up as they passed through the door to see where the magic was hidden. As people got their timing down, the door seemed to take on a certain rhythm with a swish, release, swish, release.

At this point, Lyle fetched his Polaroid and was taking pictures as fast as he could. He was so busy that he didn't notice that as soon as the people had tried out the door, they were turning right around and going out the exit door and returning to the end of the line to go through again. The whole time the door was working like a pendulum. Swish. Release. Swish. Release. One after another, the people kept coming.

Sturgis, in the meantime, who had been standing by and watching the result of his fine work, caught a whiff of something that didn't sit right in the middle of all this excitement. It was barely noticeable, but after another twenty or so people tried out the door, there was no mistaking it. He knew burnt rubber when he smelled it. After studying the situation, he concluded that maybe he should have gone back to his truck for that roll of 12-gauge wire after all, instead of using the 14-gauge wire, which at the time had seemed adequate. But seeing as how there appeared to be no end to this line of door openers, and with the whiff now turning into a definite odor, Sturgis set off to try to find Lyle.

Locating Lyle was not a problem, with the flash on the Polaroid going off every minute from inside the store. The problem for Sturgis, though, was getting to Lyle, since getting to Lyle meant cutting through the line of door openers, and none of them was willing to risk losing his place in line by letting anyone break the chain.

As people got their timing down, the door seemed to take on a certain rhythm with a swish, release, swish, release.

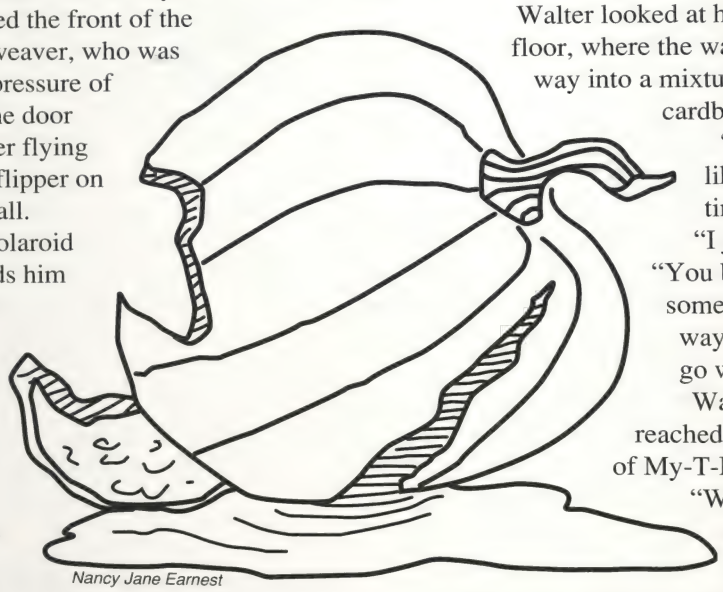
Sturgis went around the corner and peered in the front window. Lyle was there, inside, kneeling on one leg, working not one but two Polaroids now. Sturgis waved his arms in the air,

but when he finally caught Lyle's attention, Lyle just smiled and flashed him a victory salute. Sturgis pointed frantically to the door and shouted, "It's gonna overheat. It's gonna overheat!" Lyle cupped his hand to his ear, then figured Sturgis had said, "I'm gonna go eat," so he smiled real big and gave Sturgis the OK sign.

It was at that instant that something in the workings of the door snapped. A bushing maybe, or the solenoid. Whatever it was, though, it made that door go crazy. Instead of returning to a closed position, it started swinging all the way open in the other direction. And the cycling mechanism went all haywire because as soon as the electric eye part detected something in its field of vision, which in this case was the door itself, it triggered the open phase, which sent the door immediately flying back in the other direction. The people in the back of the line, of course, couldn't tell what had happened and were keeping the movement of the line going at the nice rhythm to which they had grown accustomed, which slowly pushed the front of the line into the path of the door. Ivy Lineweaver, who was next in line, dug in both heels, but the pressure of the people behind her was too great. The door caught her on its open cycle and sent her flying into the store. It was like watching the flipper on a pinball machine, with Ivy as the pinball.

Lyle was still looking through the Polaroid when he saw Ivy come shooting towards him on the newly waxed floor.

Lyle was still looking through the Polaroid when he saw Ivy come shooting towards him on the newly waxed floor. Ivy's speed knocked him down and was enough to send the two of them flying backward into the pyramid of pumpkins that Vernon had just recently set up to get people into the holiday spirit. Not a second later, the door was sending the next pinball right at them. And then the next. One after another, each person who came within reach of the door was throttled in the direction of the ever growing pile of bodies and broken pumpkins.



Nancy Jane Earnest

Several people who hadn't been part of the door openers joined Sturgis at the front window. "Looks like a damn batting practice," one of them said.

"Should have used the 12-gauge wire," Sturgis replied.

Across the street at the Say When, Walter was just washing down his last biscuit and gravy with a sip of coffee when Paula happened to look out the window. "I didn't know you were going to have the fire department in on this grand opening."

Walter didn't even turn around to look. He just wiped his mouth with his napkin, put three dollars on the counter and said, "Guess it's time to go check on Lyle."

The volunteers were already rolling up the hoses by the time Walter made it over to the store. The last of the hangers-on were slowly working their way to their pickups, wiping pumpkin pulp from their clothes. In all the commotion, the ropes on the new sign had somehow gotten tangled around the fire truck's rear axle. The yellow plastic "FAST SACK" lay in the parking lot, the "Fast" no longer connected to the "Sack." One of the firemen said it was sheer luck that none of the door-openers had been killed.

Walter found Lyle inside sitting on the side of an overturned shopping cart, slowly patting his face with a whole roll of paper towels. When he saw his father, Lyle started to get up, but then sat back down, put his chin in the palms of his hands and shook his head. "I told them not to use water. Anybody could tell this was a Class C fire. You don't use water on a Class C fire. Look at what they did to the greeting cards."

Walter didn't say anything. He turned to where the cards used to be neatly arranged.

Lyle went on: "Grand Opening, hell. More like a Grand Closing. This town is hopeless. It's just too — backwards. Too damn backwards to salvage."

Walter looked at his son, then looked at the floor, where the water was slowly working its way into a mixture of pumpkin mash and cardboard packaging.

"Well," said Walter. "Looks like Vernon may get the overtime he's been asking for."

"I just don't get it," said Lyle. "You bust your butt to make something better, and there's always something just waiting to go wrong. I just don't get it."

Walter didn't say anything. He reached down and picked up a can of My-T-Fine peaches from the floor.

"What say you and me go across the street. Nothing like a cup of coffee to help figure things out."

Lyle took one more look at the wreckage, then slowly got up and threw the roll of paper towels into a shopping cart. "Guess I've done enough damage for one day."

As they headed out the door, Lyle stooped to pick up the bright orange poster that had announced the grand opening. The only words you could still make out were "The Event of the Year." He stared at the electric eye door and then turned toward Walter. "I don't know how you ever lasted so long in this place," he said. "There's no progress. Don't you ever think it's just going to all shrivel up and die?"

Walter stuck both hands in his pockets and watched as the

last pickup pulled out of the parking lot and headed up toward the highway. "Oh, I don't know," he said. "Progress is a funny thing. It's kind of like the majority of the people take naturally to walking forwards, but there's always going to be some that walk backwards. And it really doesn't make a whole lot of difference if you're partial to one way or the other, as long as you're moving in the right direction."

The electric eye door was stuck wide open. They walked out into the parking lot. Walter glanced at Lyle as he took in what was left of the "FAST SACK" sign. Lyle stood there, tapped the "K" with the toe of his shoe, and gave a short little sigh before turning back toward his father. The two men moved across the parking lot without saying a word, their legs matching stride for stride. Stopping at the edge of the street, they both looked one way and then the other before crossing.

"You know," said Lyle. "I've been doing some reading. You'd be amazed at the savings we could make if we switched to using bar codes. Have I told you about bar codes?"

"Bar codes. Don't think you have. Hmm. Something sure smells good. You think it's too early to ask Paula for a chance at a piece of that rhubarb pie?"

Before entering the cafe, both men turned and looked across the street. Where the "FAST SACK" sign had fallen from, thirty years of sun had bleached the brick to the point you could still make out the words "McCabe's Market." Walter held the door to the Say When open for his son. Or it may have been the other way around. From the back, you really couldn't tell who was who. N&T

This is Jeff Shearer's first published short story. A winner of the 1995 Tennessee Writers Alliance Short Story Contest, Shearer is an English major who now finds himself trying to make sense of financial software instead of Faulkner as a Nashville technical analyst. Inspired by a daughter's offhand remark, "Grand Opening" reinforces the notion that kids, in addition to everything else, are a great source of material.

Some Taxonomical Confusion

I've never understood why people
always associate us with mountains:
The Alleghenies, the Ozarks
and the cedar islands
off the coast of East Tennessee.
Perhaps it has something
to do with the way the rain falls
in darkness, leak in the barn roof
that suggests a greater rent;
or how, on Sundays, the buggies
bear up on these flat highways
as if under great weight. Certainly
the clothes do not suggest
except sometimes, in winter,
when they wrap and settle
like the wind in Fancy Gap.
We whistled through, this last time
coming back from Ohio, and saw
the lights of Cana thrown below us,
pinpoint shipwrecks, thinking
about Jesus, the water, the wine,
and the way the summer produce stands
crowd so close to the highway
that one cannot make out
yellow crosses on distant hill.
Ohio's right angle landscape
suits us better. Here
motives cast layered shadows
behind plain clapboard boxes. We passed a few,
coming back from Ohio, and wondered
just what kind of people
they might hold: like us maybe,
in startled renunciation
and in transit, the scandalous crenallation,
those glass-bottomed peaks, in love.

— G.C. Waldrep

G.C. Waldrep, born in 1968 in South Boston, Va., is currently a baker and free-lance historian living in the Amish community near Yanceyville, N.C. He has some poems on hold awaiting publication; in fact, this poem in Now & Then *may be his first published effort.*

Reviews

It Comes From the People: Community Development and Local Theology

by Mary Ann Hinsdale, Helen M. Lewis, and S. Maxine Waller

Temple University Press
Philadelphia - 1995
$19.95 (paper)
$49.95 (hardcover)

I went out on a limb and had a dream.
— Maxine Waller

Social histories of struggles for justice in Appalachia often err in one of two directions. Either the historian romanticizes the movement's participants and their stories so that the end result is more myth than fact or the writer ignores the value of myth altogether in the pursuit of an empirical objectivity.

Either way, the work suffers because struggles for social justice involve both myth and fact. There is an empirical record, which inevitably contains "insider" information demonstrating the humanity, flaws, and mistakes of those engaged in the struggle. But there is also the meaning of the struggle within some moral and historical framework. As readers, we must be told what has happened honestly, but we should also catch some sense of why the story has any relevance or urgency, of what inspired and sustained the people in their struggle.

This book does both — and does them very well.

We learn about Ivanhoe, Va., a small rural town dying the way small towns in Appalachia do — slowly, as one factory or mine after another closes, and painfully, as schools, churches, and much of the population fade away. We also learn about Maxine Waller and her little army of neighbors and "outsider" friends: sociologist and community educator Helen Lewis, currently on the Highlander Research and Education Center's education staff in New Market, Tenn., and Mary Ann Hinsdale, who teaches liberation and feminist theologies at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass.

These women are determined to turn things around and to (just maybe) change the whole world for the better in the process. Finally, we learn a great deal about the theory and practice of community-based economics, leadership and organizational development, education, theology, history, and art.

The story of Ivanhoe's return from the grave is about outside helpers and inside "organic" leadership. It is about bringing a community back together and cultivating a sense of pride, a sense of direction, and the knowledge and skills needed to accomplish economic and cultural revitalization. It is about a philosophy of community development which eschews dependence on government, big business, or experts and places hope in and responsibility on the people themselves.

We are also privy to a lot of behind-the-scenes dynamics. Interpersonal and personality conflicts are part of the story, and they are described and reflected on with candor. Not all the problems of Ivanhoe are neatly resolved. Some questions about how other communities might apply lessons learned from Ivanhoe's experience have no immediate answers.

But this is not all.

Just like a Billy Graham crusade, this book has a message. Be forewarned. The authors are out to convert us. (They call the process "reverse evangelism.")

Hinsdale wants to "put [us] in touch with [our] own power . . . to contact the wisdom and inherent knowledge of people whom the dominant culture dismisses as 'ignorant' or 'deviant': the poor, women, persons of color, gays and lesbians . . . [and] to appreciate both the connection with and the difference between 'charity' and 'justice.'"

Lewis wants us to stop avoiding "religious discussion or analysis in our economic education or general educational philosophy . . . [because] community transformation must involve religious as well as political and economic transformation." And Maxine Waller, who served as the Ivanhoe Civic League's founder and president and about whom much of the book is written, says "to all who pick up this book, I hope and pray that this will help you to understand: that to help is not a hand*out*, but a hand *up*, and you are the first to receive the hand and the first person up."

As a member of the academic community, I found myself challenged to rethink what makes for good science and appropriate education in Appalachia. These systems, we are warned, all too easily serve as "a tool for the disempowerment of ordinary people through the legitimation of the rule of experts: [whereas] our study was part of a community development process, aimed toward empowerment of persons and communities."

In place of traditional science and education which, the authors say, only make people more dependent, they opt for a participatory research approach. Participatory research, as Hinsdale, Lewis, and Waller explain it, differs fundamentally from conventional research because it is generated by the people of a community for the community. The community itself sets the agenda and controls the process.

While both community members and outside specialists conduct the research, the outside specialists fully realize that they have as much to learn from their community counterparts as the community members have to learn from them. In fact, the authors see "organic intellectuals" emerging from the process, people from the community who acquire a heightened awareness, knowledge, and technical expertise. Most importantly, the research is *problem-centered*. The object is not to simply gather data for the sake of gathering data but to use information to come up with a solution that improves people's lives.

It Comes From the People is dedicated to Highlander activist and popular educator Myles Horton, who knew about Ivanhoe and who died as the book project was getting started. The authors promise that "Myles would have liked the book."

I believe he would have not only liked the book, he would have seen it as evidence that the Highlander approach of people helping themselves through community-building and empowerment has achieved a new level of maturity. Practitioners of this approach are now willing to critique themselves in addition to criticizing oppressive cultural and economic systems. You could say that the Highlander approach at Ivanhoe honors both

fact and myth.

This book is a must-read for anyone interested in Appalachia and in economics and social justice, making democracy work, women's ways of knowing and doing, a better way to conceptualize social science, and community-based solutions to human problems through education, art, and religion.

— Guy L. Osborne

Guy L. Osborne chairs the Appalachian Studies Committee and teaches psychology at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn. He is especially interested in community-based education and serves on the board of the Mountain Women's Exchange in Jellico, Tenn.

Hillbillyland: What the Movies Did to the Mountains and What the Mountains Did to the Movies

by J. W. Williamson

University of North Carolina Press
Chapel Hill, N.C. - 1995
$15.95 (paper)
$39.95 (hardcover)

Trying to decipher American popular culture, particularly as shown in the movies, is a bit like trying to nail the proverbial serving of Jell-O to the wall. You can see it, you can tell what flavor it is, you can even hold it if you really want to, but you can't quite bring it under control. No matter which way you push it, it just comes back the other way.

But with popular culture, you need to try at least to understand what's going on. Something so pervasive as a long-standing cinematic image, whether it be of the cowboy or the vamp or the hillbilly, obviously has significance, but knowing what that significance is for certain is an illusive goal. The effort, however, is always well worth the trouble and often reveals surprisingly new flavors.

In his most recent book, Appalachian State University English professor J. W. Williamson has tackled a seemingly narrow aspect of popular cinematic culture and has confronted much of what we as moviegoers have long suspected. He has also found much that is new. Williamson's subject is the image of the hillbilly in the movies, but it is not the precise topic it might at first seem.

Let's for a moment oversimplify greatly what is a very complex process. When we take the time to think about it, we realize that we have often consciously relied on the movies to form our opinions on all sorts of subjects. And in a society that is reading less and less, the movies sometimes provide us with our only glimpse into certain worlds. It is not so hard, then, to realize the enormous influence movies have in forming cultural stereotypes.

Williamson has studied hundreds of movies, from early silent films such as *Billie — the Hill Billy* (1915) to later pictures such as *Sergeant York* (1941) with Gary Cooper or *A Face in the Crowd* (1957) with Andy Griffith. These three films alone present three very different characterizations — one humorous, another pious and forthright, the third conniving — and yet all conjure up elements of the stereotyped hillbilly persona.

To those types, he has added films such as *Raising Arizona* (1987), *Thelma and Louise* (1991), and *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992). Because he tackled such a broad range of seemingly disparate films, he has been widely criticized by various reviewers.

It is important, though, to realize the wide cultural view he is after. The hillbillies we know so well — from, for example, the comic *Ma and Pa Kettle* series (1949-1954) or the dark, threatening *Deliverance* (1972) — hardly begin to explain fully the many ways in which the hillbilly has entered our consciousness.

Thus, Williamson defines the word

Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research

In a series of movies in the 1940s and 1950s, Marjorie Main and Percy Kilbride starred as Ma and Pa Kettle, forerunners of *The Beverly Hillbillies'* Clampetts.

hillbilly as representing something altogether more inclusive and complex, as an individual seen as "rough, rural, poor but fruitful, blatantly anti-urban, and often dangerous, but not necessarily hailing from the Southern Appalachians or even from any mountains." That way, the James brothers raised in hardscrabble Missouri and robbing banks in rural Minnesota in *The Long Riders* (1980) are as good a subject for study as the Doolin brothers running moonshine in Harlan County, Ky., in *Thunder Road* (1958). They all come from the rough and "hilly side of the American economy."

That's a fair definition, particularly considering how Williamson is interested not only in what the images are, but also in how we as viewers have reacted to them — and, more importantly, how we have used them. Williamson skillfully points out that the hillbilly image embodies our sense of fun (*No Time for Sergeants,* 1958), our fears (*Bad Georgia Road,* 1977), our hopes (*Coal Miner's Daughter,* 1980), even our lusts (*Child Bride of the Ozarks,* 1937), and often our muddled sense of history (*Allegheny Uprising,* 1939). What makes these movies such favorites, Williamson concludes, is that mainstream Americans find a vicarious, unbridled, sometimes uncontrollable freedom in all of the many hillbilly characterizations.

There is, however, a darker side to the exchange between viewer and stereotype. It is the identical audience, the author adds, that uses the very same films as an easy benchmark to confirm its own presumably higher station in society. In the end, the down-home ways of L'il Abner, Sheriff Buford T. Justice, or Blaze Starr work against themselves. It all says far more about us as viewers than it does about the hillbilly as subject. And that makes this study of a popular image well worth careful reading.

— Edward D. C. Campbell, Jr.

Edward D. C. Campbell, Jr., is director of the Library of Virginia's Research and Information Services division in Richmond, Va., and author of The Celluloid South: Hollywood and the Southern Myth. *He teaches courses on American film, most recently on images of Southern women in the movies.*

Counting the Sums
by Rita Sims Quillen

Sow's Ear Press
Abingdon, Va. - 1995
$11.00 (paper)

Two strong realizations drive *Counting the Sums,* Rita Sims Quillen's vivid first book of poetry: the fact that she is indeed a poet and the fact that she is a woman.

These same concerns innervate others, too — Anne Waldman, Diane Wakoski, Carolyn Forché, Marilyn Hacker, and a throbbing gaggle of more than I can name at the moment. But, though Quillen's focus of regard may seem feminist in tenor, she has little in common with these songsters. For while she shares the sorrows of her sister poets, she does not expect the world to redress them. Her own strength she finds sufficient.

Not that it's easy. "Woman Writer" pungently describes some of the difficulties: "Spending the days attending to bodily functions / our own and everyone else's / gives us a handicap." Like all mothers, she is tired and distracted, too busy with her family to write the poems that come, like children, to hover about her, hoping to be written while they watch her do housework, "just watch and wait." But she does not despair, nor even whine, and is able to couch her deep disappointment in wryly humorous terms:

> While my son warms in my arms
> a line that could make me famous
> leaps up in my face
> spits and leaves by the back door.

Self-pity is not her forte. In "Poets," she recognizes that her lot is the usual one for all poets, male or female, mother or spinster: "People who live by poetry do not pass easy days." But would she exchange her situation for one in which the Muse never tweaked her cervical cortex? Not on your diaper pail. She glories in being one of those poets who "stand out in rainstorms to feel" how it "sounds," who "stop and stare at the wind, laugh and cry / easily," one who "wastes words / on the inexpressible, can be had for a song."

To express the inexpressible — that is the ancient, honorable, improbable, virgin ambition of all true poets. For some it is a metaphysical obligation; for some, an emotional necessity; for others, a civic or personal responsibility. I believe responsibility is what serves as Quillen's chief motive.

One of the reasons she writes poetry is that her mother could not or, at any rate, did not. Three poems tell about her mother crying softly in bed in the deep night beside her oblivious husband. That was her way of expressing the inexpressible, and she must have been frightening to the man when at last he did understand.

In "My Mother, She Was Very Old Fashioned," Quillen makes a sad but savvy conjecture about her father: "I think / he could hear the wolf / cry in the back of her throat, / knew she shouldn't belong / to him but that she would / stay." The mother stays with the father because of her private code of honor, even though her soul turns "to ashes" because her husband never seems to comprehend, never knows "the closeness / connection to a twin heart."

That word *connection* is crucial; it occurs earlier in this poem when she describes the father as "a good kind man" who "just couldn't connect anywhere / but at the hips." It occurs again in "Nexus," a poem that tells of taking the poet's young daughter to watch some watering bees while the writer wonders when the little girl will be old enough to understand the fact of mortality, when she will realize with "a flicker of connection" that people, like bees, live for a brief space only.

The most revealing use of the word comes in the middle of "Another Requiem," a poem that recounts the death of the mother. The scene is the bedroom, with the speaker as a small child barely able to "peek over the bed's edge / over the billowing bedcovers / at the figure who used to be mother." Outside, it is a breezy November day, and the hollybush by the window keeps brushing the pane with a single leaf. The child imagines that the mother's soul will leave her body and be conducted "to air to glass to leaf, / passing the pliant stem / into the dark / warm / dirt."

She knows she must bid her mother good-bye but cannot make herself do it. As her Aunt Betty takes her away from the place, she attempts to keep her mother alive by short-circuiting the soul's passage from "glass to leaf" with an act of magic: "I tear away one leaf / leaving the soul hanging on air / in the light."

"Another Requiem" is perhaps Quillen's most powerful performance; its narrative hinges on a childhood fancy easily dismissed as silly, yet there is as much wistful force in this poem as in a consoling hand squeezing the shoulder of a mourner. And its central stanza, the lines upon which the drama rests, applies not only to this single situation but to the whole vision of the poet. All things are joined, delicately but tactually, and each thing is important to every other:

> One green perfect leaf
> On the hollybush outside
> mother's window
> Touches the pane —
> just one —
> its exquisite tip making contact
> a centimeter of connection.

That, in Quillen's view, is the poet's task: to mark that connection and to measure it, to see that it truly exists and to make others see it. Folks speak of baseball as a "game of inches"; this poetry is a game of centimeters, and a serious game it is.

Rita Sims Quillen concludes her strong *Counting the Sums* with an image of that "centimeter of connection." She means it physically, as Walt Whitman would, and she means it to be — just as he would — both comradely and erotic:

> Your hand on my white skin
> finding the place
> where I end, we begin.

— Fred Chappell

Fred Chappell, who teaches at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, has received many awards, including the Bollingen Prize in poetry.

Courageous Paths: Stories of Nine Appalachian Women

edited by

Jane B. Stephenson

New Opportunity School for Women
Berea, Ky. - 1995
$9.95 (paper)

I feel very good about myself. I feel real strong. I know there's going to be a lot of things, a lot of obstacles in the way, but gee, look what I've overcome already.

— Ada

These words reflect the feelings of the women who tell their own stories in *Courageous Paths,* a collection of the edited transcripts of lengthy tape-recorded interviews with nine graduates of the New Opportunity School for Women in Berea, Ky. All these women improved their lives as a result of having attended this program.

Established in 1987 as an outreach program of Berea College, the New Opportunity School twice a year selects 14 low-income, unemployed, middle-aged women to come to campus free of charge for a three-week residential program. The program includes classes, work experience, and cultural activities designed to prepare them to enter the work force. The school has proven highly successful, with almost 70 percent of its graduates either already employed or currently receiving further training.

Not only does the school teach its students obvious job-related skills, such as how to write a resume, but even more crucially, it also stresses the importance of a positive self-concept. In the book's preface, the school's founder and director Jane Stephenson explains, "Building self-esteem is one of the most important goals of the program — and one of the most needed." She stresses that this self-published volume is not designed to "advertise" the school but rather to show how such programs can make a difference in the lives of Appalachian women.

Early in their lives, these Appalachian women seemed hopelessly trapped. Some of the problems they faced as children included poverty, abuse, and alcoholism. These difficulties resulted in most of the girls quitting school before they were 18 years old either to get married or simply to leave the household in order to escape their terrible home lives. The women's straightforward descriptions pull the reader into their miseries and their frustrations. They knew they wanted a better way of life, but they did not know how to achieve that goal.

Katie is a good example. Shortly after her mother's sudden death, she began looking after three of her brothers — two older and one younger — when she was only 10 years old. Often, her father disappeared for weeks at a time. In the 11th grade, she quit school to get married. As companies kept closing down and her husband worked off and on, Katie took odd jobs to help meet the costs of rearing a family.

After her son graduated from high school, she got her general equivalency diploma and, against the wishes of her husband, went to the New Opportunity School. She now has a part-time job at the post office and is going to Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, Ky. As she explains in her story, "I need and want to go to school. Within the next five years, I intend for life to get better. I don't want it to get any worse. It just takes determination and hard, honest work."

Each of the nine women talk of their experiences with the New Opportunity School, describing the doubts and fears they felt upon entering the program. For each of these women, the school was "a life-changing experience." As Letcher County, Ky., native Starr says, "It must have made me realize that there is something else out there. I don't have to sit back and wait for somebody to bring it to me because that won't happen. You have to go out and dig and go for it yourself."

These nine "simple" stories paint a clear picture of how lives tangled in abuse, fear, alcohol, children, and unemployment can be improved with self-confidence, self-direction, and education. These stories paint vivid pictures and make the reader feel as though he or she is a neighbor listening in the kitchen over a cup of coffee.

Ada, who had endured the terror of marriage to an alcoholic for years, says, "I'm happy. For the first time in so long I don't have fears. I'm thirty-seven years old. From the time I was sixteen years old I had dealt with abuse — until now. And now I'm just really getting my own feelings."

Crystal, who had married at 13 and had five children by the time she was 19, ends her interview with these words: "When things get really hard, I remember Alex Haley saying to us, 'If you don't try, you can't ever get anywhere. You've got to have that confidence!!' . . . When I see people down on themselves and [they] think they can't do anything at all, that they can't even start, I try to talk to them. I say, 'Hey, you can. If I can, anybody can!'"

— June Lee

June Lee, a public school educator and coordinator for the gifted in Jefferson County, Tenn., has worked in numerous programs for the disadvantaged in Appalachia.

Justice in the Coalfields

a video directed by Anne Lewis

produced by Appalshop Films
Whitesburg, Ky. - 1995
$295 VHS Color Format

If we must grind up human flesh and bones in the industrial machine that we call modern America, then before God I assert that those who consume the coal and you and I who benefit from that service . . . owe protection to those men first and we owe security to their families if they die.

— Labor leader John L. Lewis, testifying before the United States Congress in 1947.

In April 1989, 42 years after Lewis issued his indictment of America's coal mining industry, 1,700 members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in Virginia and West Virginia went on strike against the Pittston Coal Company. Pittston's contract with the union had expired, and the company abruptly terminated the medical benefits of 1,500 pensioners, widows, and disabled miners.

Justice in the Coalfields is a powerful if minimalist documentary that follows the United Mine Workers' strike. It examines how Pittston's decision to terminate benefits ultimately united dispossessed miners in several Appalachian coalfield communities in an effort to seek the table scraps of available justice.

Relying primarily on interviews with a senior federal district judge, a public interest lawyer, Pittston's president, and striking miners, *Justice in the Coalfields* is an honest look at how modern labor laws in right-to-work states such as Virginia have destroyed the negotiating power of unions.

Because the film does not have a narrator to serve as a moralizing voice making subjective judgments, it instead frames the debate in compelling visual images. One scene, for instance, shows hundreds of Virginia state troopers escorting replacement workers through union picket lines. Then, in wave after wave, these

Photo by Ron Skeeber

United Mine Workers of America on strike against the Pittston Coal Company.

same troopers move into a crowd of peacefully protesting union miners and arrest them all.

By juxtaposing these images with the voices of those who mine the coal and those who sell it in a declining market, the film is able to raise important questions of social justice. For example, do corporations have an obligation to respect, preserve, or even contribute to the culture of the communities from which they draw their workers?

The film begins with one of the most poignant, articulate voices of all, a disabled Pittston miner named Gail Gentry. Paralyzed from the waist down in a mining accident that crushed five of his vertebrae, Gentry lost his health benefits in February 1988. He subsequently wrote Pittston a letter protesting its decision to cut off those benefits.

We see Gentry in the opening scene reading aloud the contents of his letter, which ends with the magnificently simple plaint, "When human lives and needs can be thrown aside as easily as a worn-out piece of machinery, then that ain't right, that just ain't right." Later in the film, there are scenes of Gentry in his wheelchair engaging in acts of civil disobedience as he explains that the miners have based their protest strategies on Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement.

The film moves in rough chronological order from early 1989, when the strike began, to May 1990, documenting the aftermath of a tentative agreement between Pittston and the UMWA. There are several superb scenes of radical community action. One segment, for instance, shows the miners' wives blocking a Pittston coal preparation plant entrance in April 1989, while another depicts an occupation of the plant by 99 striking Pittston miners and a Methodist minister in September 1989.

One of the occupying strikers at the Pittston plant, when asked to assess how the company typically treats its workers, says, "They work you until you die and give you the bare minimum to exist until you are dead. And then who gives a damn, you know, when you're no longer useful?"

The film appeals finally to our ethical sense, forcing us to see the workers as dignified, albeit vulnerable, beings. They wish to make the Pittston Coal Company regard them as something more than infinitely replaceable bodies that drive the machines that drive the corporate profits that drive the culture ever onward to capitalist paradise.

In an America where industrial laborers typically have few economic rights, and where what rights they have are currently diminishing with the dissolution of unions all across the country, *Justice in the Coalfields* performs the service of issuing a call for a more moral society. Although the video strikes an elegiac tone, its message is neither defeatist nor fatalistic. It is a film that celebrates the dignity and quiet resolve of a continually exploited working class that decides to refuse to be exploited again. It offers a tribute to and a blueprint for effective community action.

If this film has a weakness, it is that some scenes lack a clear context. At times, the viewer does not know where a particular event is happening or who is speaking or to what specific question a speaker is responding. The exact location of the Greenwich, Conn.-based Pittston Coal Company, for example, is never made clear, and the interview segments with Glen M. Williams, the senior U.S. district federal judge in Big Stone Gap, Va., are meandering at best. His responses are reminiscent of Ronald Reagan speaking at a press conference during the early 1980s sans cue cards.

Despite these flaws, *Justice in the Coalfields* is in most respects a graceful and quite moving documentary that rarely loses its power. It is an excellent vehicle for discussion about the meaning of community, social justice, and corporate conscience. Anyone interested in such issues would do well to use this extraordinary film, which will be equally at home in sociology, law, political science, literature, or cultural anthropology courses.

— Andrew Hazucha

Andrew Hazucha, assistant professor of English at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., is an environmentalist active in organizations advocating social justice.

Madam Crystal

Although there is much feeling about fate
palm readers are scarce as live elms in the Bible Belt.
They choose their own exotic names.
Their lives run short and intermittently
through cave country like our lost rivers.
The clarity of the past is lost in streams,
too polluted now to be baptized in,
as if faith can be caught like diseases.
As water splashes by the handfuls, on believer's heads
the lines for love and life fold to hold the spirit.
Veils, beads, and glass balls are strange here,
yet the lines of many hands open and
fold on eloquent counsel.

—Dory Hudspeth

Dory Hudspeth is an herbalist and historical researcher focusing primarily on the Shakers of South Union, Ky. She writes nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and grant proposals and has been published in magazines as diverse as Wind *and* The Kentucky Dental Journal. *Hudspeth makes her home in Alvaton, Ky.*

A mother's vision for a better future is handed down.

Hazel Dickens

Hazel Dickens is a West Virginia native. She is a powerful, emotional singer and superb songwriter who has been featured in films such as *Matewan* and *Harlan County, USA* and magazines including *People*. Dickens left her native state at 16, joining the Appalachian exodus to outlying cities. She lives today in the Baltimore area. The poignant, autobiographical "Mama's Hand" is a "very, very personal song," says Dickens.

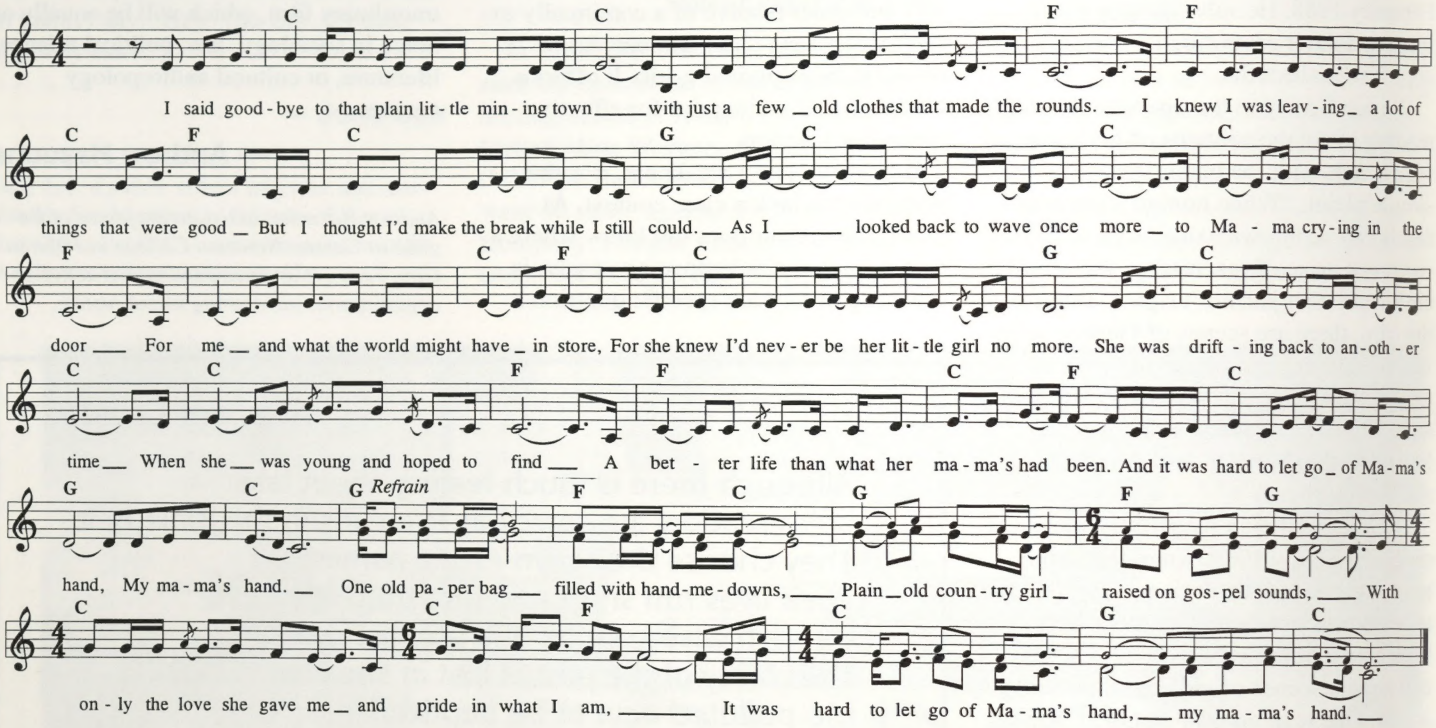
"My mother's love and devotion was a rock we leaned on — she was always there," Dickens explains. "There was a special bond between the two of us. Although we never talked about it, we just seemed to know that when I did leave, there would be a void in both our lives that no one else could fill.

"I had lain in bed at night and dreamed of this day. But I was not prepared for the sadness I felt or the sense of guilt for leaving my mother still bound by the chains of poverty while I went away to start a new life, a new chance which I knew she would never have."

— Tim Stafford

Hazel Dickens' parents, Hilary Nathan and Sarah Simpkins Dickens, just after they were married.

Mama's Hand


I said good-bye to that plain lit-tle min-ing town with just a few old clothes that made the rounds. I knew I was leav-ing a lot of
things that were good But I thought I'd make the break while I still could. As I looked back to wave once more to Ma - ma cry-ing in the
door For me and what the world might have in store, For she knew I'd nev-er be her lit-tle girl no more. She was drift-ing back to an-oth-er
time When she was young and hoped to find A bet - ter life than what her ma-ma's had been. And it was hard to let go of Ma-ma's
Refrain
hand, My ma-ma's hand. One old pa-per bag filled with hand-me-downs, Plain old coun-try girl raised on gos-pel sounds, With
on-ly the love she gave me and pride in what I am, It was hard to let go of Ma-ma's hand, my ma-ma's hand.

I said good-bye to that plain little mining town
With just a few old clothes that made the rounds.
I knew I was leaving a lot of things that were good,
But I thought I'd make the break while I still could.

As I looked back to wave once more
To Mama crying in the door
For me and what the world might have in store,
For she knew I'd never be her little girl no more.

She was drifting back to another time
When she was young and hoped to find
A better life than what her Mama's had been.
And it was hard to let go of Mama's hand, My Mama's hand.

Refrain
One old paper bag filled with hand-me-downs,
Plain old country girl raised on gospel sounds,
With only the love she gave me and pride in what I am,
It was hard to let go of Mama's hand, My Mama's hand.

I thought of all the love she gave.
I thought of all the years she'd slaved
To try and make this rundown shack a home,
A dream that really died 'fore it was born.

But she pulled us through the hardest times
And made us hold our heads up high,
A gift we've carried with us all our lives,
For we were so special in Mama's eyes.

As I looked down the dusty road
To Mama and her heavy load
I knew what I was leaving, I'd never find again.
It was hard to let go of Mama's hand, My Mama's hand.

Refrain

It was hard to let go of Mama's hand, My Mama's hand.

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Transcription and music typesetting by Marcia Cooper.

Sentimental

If I bring up the night we stood on the WPA bridge,
the concrete arches offering the span high
over the dark sweep of the nine-feet channel, elevating us,
the fissured blacktop, Henley Street and its late traffic
to this prospect, you will accuse me
of tearing the past from its fast anchor
of fact and reference. This is all we may do.
Who can greatly affect the present? It happens
all at once, from every angle and mostly with our eyes
averted, a tide of event and explanation. Fate
is to open your hand; fate means to awaken in the morning.
This world touches us slight as a greeting, our lives
a thoughtless nod of response. Few decisions
ravel among the coils of language we let burn
the responsibility from our palms, this tautening litany
of misunderstandings and helplessness. But there is something
that may be done: ask the questions again, and again
until the answers are satisfactory. Tell the stories
often, until the stories save themselves. To change
the past will make a difference in this long day.
Our lives are not brief, not in the least,
the days in their sequence so much the same as to appear
without motion. Only the broken pieces of what the stream
of our living has collected give any sense
of movement, the driftwood and buoyant debris
that were flooded into the channel far upstream
scraping and passing the piers below us. We are to the point
of hardly being able to guess what we once submersed
into the winding history we trail behind us like a wake.
You tell me the truth must be written
if it is to be maintained, and I am convinced.
Write what we say someplace dark as the sandy bed
of the river, away from all sight. Recount the words for me
later, after the passing tonnage of current has dragged itself
over your script; they will be closer
to the meanings which once moved us to reach and speak.

— Bobby Caudle Rogers

Bobby Caudle Rogers is currently assistant professor of English at Union University in Jackson. His poems have appeared in The Southern Review, The Georgia Review, Shenandoah, ZONE 3, The Greensboro Review *and other magazines.*

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Planning the Cities of the Future.
Fifth grade students in the Omega Intellectually Gifted Program taught by Melanie Sluder at Central Elementary School in Bristol, Tenn., look over their design for the city of Discovery. Discovery is located on the planet Calamire in the year 2070. Pictured (l to r) are Donnie Wilson, Kelly Whitaker, Jennifer Culp, and Christen Rausch.

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